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THE
MIRROVR
OF RELIGIOUS
PERFECTION

Devided into foure Bookes.

Written in Italian by the R. F. *Luca*
Pinelli, of the Society of
IESVS.

*And translated into English by a Father
of the same Society.*



Psalm . 138 . Vers . 15 .

Imperfectum meum viderunt oculi tui.

Permissu Superiorum . M. DC. XVIII .

THE
MIRROR
OF RELIGION
PERFECTION

Divided into four Books.

Written in Italian by the R. Father
Timothy of the Society of
JESU.

And translated into English by T. ...



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Inscribed in the Bodleian Library
on the 27th of May 1704.

TO THE RIGHT
REVEREND, AND
RELIGIOVS LADY,
BARBARA WISEMAN,
ABBESSE OF THE
ENGLISH MONASTERY
OF SION
IN LISBONE,
OF THE HOLY ORDER
OF S. BRIGIT.

AND
TO THE REST OF THE
RELIGIOVS SISTERS
OF THAT HOLY HOVSE,
AND FAMILY.

TO THE RIGHT
REVEREND, AND
RELIGIOUS LADY,
RIGHT
REVEREND LADY
AND
RELIGIOUS
SISTER

AND
TO THE REST OF THE
RELIGIOUS SISTERS
OF THAT HOLY HOUSE
DID
AND FAMILY.

TO THE RIGHT
REVEREND, AND
RELIGIOUS LADY,
RIGHT
REVEREND LADY,
AND
RELIGIOUS
SISTERS,

DID



D I D not the abundance of my Respectfull Affection to your holy House and Family, overcome the distance of Place, or my small Acquaintance; I should not commend this little Treatise of RELIGIOUS PERFECTION to a Patronage so far remote from our Natiue Countrey: but rather seeke a Protectour neerer home. But seing so much Land, as lyeth betweene, doth not hinder the Fame of your Ver-

THE EPISTLE

tuous Example & austere Life,
from passing into these parts:
so neither shall the seas drowne
my Desires of your continuall
Progresse, nor stay them from
aduenturing with this Present,
to make them knowne vnto
you.

In this R E L I G I O U S
M I R R O R, you may behould
rare Vertues, and accordingly
draw in your selues the forme
of highest Perfection. Heere
shall you find whatsoeuer may
help to the spirituall Aduance-
ment of your soules: and by
reading attentiuely, reape con-
digne fruites of your deuout
Labours. The Method is easy,
the Stile plaine, the Treasure
thereof

DEDICATORY.

thereof infinitely rich; and the Author well knowne through the world by his worthy Treatises of Piety, and Devotion: Wherof this One may seem, by Gods speciall Providence, appointed for fuel to increase the fire of Devotion in your Breasts; thereby to inflame the Harts of many Worthy Personages, to an holy Emulation of your Example.

I will not trouble your Ladship, nor the rest of your vertuous Family with a longer Epistle; but end, with many hartly wishes of spirituall Light to your soules by this resplendent MIRROR, and of Happiness to our afflicted Countrey

by

THE EPISTLE.

by your returne to your Ancient SION, now forlorne and desolate by your Absence. At least, that I may meet with you in the Heauenly SION, with all Respectfullnes I craue your holy prayers. This feast of the Glorious Virgin SAINT BRIGIT, resting euer,

Your La. deuoted
seruant,

I.VV.



THE PREFACE
OF THE AVTHOR TO
THE RELIGIOUS
Seruants of God.

I*T is my intention Religious Reader, in a simple and perspicuous stile to write a Treatise no like unto that which is intituled, The Imitation of Christ, composed by that learned and Religious servant of God Thomas à Kempis; but yet very fit and profitable to the profession of Religious Persons. Wherin certaine wholesome Admonitions, and Documents are by Christ our Lord prescribed vnto euery Religious person, as well for the knowledge of his owne defectes, as the attaining to that*
* 5 *perfection*

THE PREFACE.

perfection of spirituall life, whereunto by obligation of his vocation he is bound to aspire.

This little Worke of myne, whatsoever it is, as I haue compiled it by Gods assisting hand: so haue I thought good to dedicate the same to the seruants of God, to the end they may be the more incited & stirred up to the reading therof. And though I must confesse, that there be already extant no small store of Bookes of this kind: yet I trust this of myne will be neither unprofitable, nor unpleasant. And as there is not one and the same gust of all, in reading and handling such spirituall assayres; so is it convenient, that oftentimes the same matter be handled diuers and sundry wayes, that therby euery one may read, and affect what shall best agree with his tast. Almighty God vouchsafe of his infinite goodnes to communicate vnto vs all so much of his Grace, as both by this, and other spirituall Treatises we may reap that fruit, which may preserue vs from all sinne in this life, and from all punishment in the next. Amen.

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THE



THE
MIRROVR OF
Religious Perfection.

THE FIRST BOOKE.

Wherin is treated of Vocation to Religion, and of the End thereof, which is Perfection.

Of the End which God requireth of those, whome he calleth to Religion.

CHAP. I.

MY Sonne, I am the Authour and Creatour of men, and therefore haue I a singular care of them all: & to euery one do I suggest such a manner of directing his life, as by the conduct wherof, in louing & seruing me his Lord and Maker, he cannot erre in attayning his eternall saluation. But some
A haue

haue I selected and chosen out in particular, amongst which number thou art one, and Called from the world to Religion, that is, to a state far more excellent & more perfect then the secular, that thou mightst know, loue, and serue me after a more perfect manner, and with more facility and ease attaine to Heaven, enriched with the merits of good Works. Neither haue I ordained the Offices and exercises, which thou hast found in religion wherto I haue called thee, to any other end, then that by the help therof thou shouldst labour more or lesse to the perfection of a spirituall life. For if there be iust cause, that more be exacted of them, to whome more hath been given, for the like reason also a greater loue and desire of Perfection is required at the hands of the Religious vpon whome I haue heaped, and with munificent hand bestowed so singular gifts and priuiledges.

2. So did I before time deliuer my most beloued people of *Israel* out of their sore seruitude of *Aegypt*, that being brought into the most pleasant *Land of Promise*, they might there attend to the seruing of me in a more quiet, and perfect manner. Therefore did I by *Moyse* giue them a Law, & appointed them Ceremonies to obserue and keep.

All

Religious Perfection. (*Lib. I.*) 3

All were indeed exempted, & set free from the miseries of *Egypt*, but all entered not into the *Land of Promise*. For they who out of an hard hart became rebellious to my precepts, were as vngrateful persons deservedly punished & taken out of this life: for he is not worthy of pardon, who contemneth his Lord and Maisters commaund.

3. O how much are those Religious persons deceived, who thinke they haue satisfied their vocation, if they charge not, nor staine their conscience with mortal sins, and when they do any the very least good worke, they thinke I am contented therewith, and therupon, without further care or desire of ariuing to Perfection, they languish and become carelesse in my seruice. But the cause standeth not so: for I haue deliuered the from out the snares of the world, and out of the daunger of more grieuous faults, not for any other end, then that they may the more readily attayne to the perfection of a spirituall life, by seruing of me truly, and deseruing my grace by the continuall exercise of holy actions.

4. Certes, that man who out of a certaine carelesnes neglecteth to attaine to the perfection that I require of him, besides this going backward, and fainting, pleaseth me

nothing at all . For as I haue said by my Prophet , it is not inough to haue declyned from euill, but he must further do what good he can, cōformably to the state whereunto he is called. He sustayneth a great detriment, who when he may with his commodity, by carelesnes neglecteth the abundant gaine of spirituall things. And therefore no meruaile, though some religious persons neuer come to those inestimable treasures, that I haue prepared for them in the Land of the liuing . And more then this, it is no wonder, that some do leaue their vocation, and returne to the flesh pots of *Aegypt*, that is vnto the world, sith I do most iustly permit it for their negligence, carelesnes, & ingratitude vnto me. For he is worthily spoiled of his goods, who either knoweth them not or vseth them not according as he should do.

5. If I had freed you but from the worlds calamities, miseries, and deceits, I had done you a great good turne; but I haue besids this called you to Religion, haue admitted you as it were into myne owne family, and bestowed all manner of commodities vpon you, that you might the more perfectly serue me. Go to, tell me whosoever thou be, that hast not a will to labour to come to that Perfection of louing and seruing me, but thinkest it

it inough, if thou offendest me not with a mortall sinne, whose is the greater hurt, myne, or thine? surely it is thine alone, and that much greater then thou conceiuest. Againe tell me, if thou enioyedst al commodities in the world, and wert freed from all daungers of life, and wert further assured of thy saluation, wouldst thou not hold it for a singular benefite to serue me thy Creatour & Lord? doubtlesse thou wouldst.

6. Now then seeing I haue exempted thee from all miseries and troubles of the world, and haue deliuered thee from the daungers both of body and soule, that thou maist be able the more commodiously to serue me the King of Glory, iudge thou thy self whether it be not fit & requisite for thee to shake off al drowfines & negligence. Dost thou peraduenture thinke, that I require of thee more pure, and more perfect loue and seruice, then of secular persons, because any commodity may therby accrew vnto me? It is not so: for I need not thy seruice, sith al the fruit therof redoundeth not to me, but vnto thy selfe.

7. Besids, the state of thy profession requireth, that thou serue me withall the perfection that possibly in thee lyeth, sith Religion is nothing els, but the Schoole of Perfection

fection. Neither is it any other thing to be religious, then to enter into a course of life, wherein a man may labour to the perfection of loving me, and imbracing of vertues. Wherefore vaine is the Religion of those, who in the exercise of good works neglect this way of perfection. For this is that which I require of all Religious Persons; this is my will, and for this very cause haue I drawn them out of the worlds snares, and placed them in the paradise of religion. The tree may not continue long standing in the orchard, that shal not bring forth fruite, for which it was there planted, set, or grafted.

Wherein consisteth the Perfection of the loue, and seruing of God, wherunto a Religion Person is bound: and what God requireth at his hands.

CHAP. II.

SO ME religious persons do performe great matters. If they do them not moued out of a pure loue to me, they neither please me, nor am I bound to any remuneration for them; but if they do them for loue of me, yet with a languishing, and imperfect loue, they do not satisfie their profession and vocation. So when I called thee out of the world

Religious Perfection. (Lib. I.) 3

world, thou didest deliuer thy selfe wholly vnto me, and didest promise to do all for my loue, and I accepted this thy promise, receiued thee into my house, as one of myne, gaue thee my Livery, provided thee of all necessaries, and intreated and vsed thee as one most deare vnto me. And if thou now shalt haue a will to let some other enter into, and possesse thy hart, or to make this part common to another besides me, thou shouldst not indeed discharge the office and part of a perfect louer, such thou must not giue that to another, that thou hast giuen to me already. For he who receyueth and taketh vnto himselfe the thing againe, that he hath once giuen to another, either for himselfe or to giue to another, is a theefe and worthy to be punished.

2. Hast thou a desire, my Sonne, to know, what religious person loueth me perfectly? Truly he doth it, who in all things, as well little as great, seeketh to do what pleaseth me: who delayeth no tyme of executing my will so soone as he shall vnderstand it: who doeth not only willingly obey my commandmets, but also manifesteth a promptitude and readines in himselfe, at the very least signe or becke of my will. A perfect louer hath one and the same hart, and the same will with the

the beloued, and therefore both hateth, and loueth what the beloued hateth or loueth. A perfect louer spareth no paynes nor trauaile, all wearines is sweet vnto him, that he may accomplish, what is pleasing to the beloued. The perfect louer is not only wary and vigilant not to displease the beloued in the very least thing, but also is exceeding careful to please him more and more. He that laboureth not to affect and loue a thing as it deserueth, either knoweth it not, or is otherwise iniurious vnto it.

3. That religious man is far from perfection, who when he shall haue set his affection & care ouermuch vpon things of litle regard, is much troubled, and lamenteth if I at any time procure, or cause the same to be remoued, or taken away from him. This is a signe of an imperfect louer, who loueth me more in words then in deeds. He doth indeed confesse in words, that he hath giuen himselfe wholly vnto me, but his hart intangled with dissembled loue, holdeth him so fast tyed, as if I would vse myne owne right in wholly enioying it, & thrust out of it the loue of the very least thing of all, it would eftsfoones bee in trouble, and rise against me. Many say, and brag that they loue me, but I only regard them, who loue me in works & verity

Verity. The tongue maketh no true and sincere louers, but the works that haue their source and spring from a pious and deuout mind.

4. It remaineth now, that I shew vnto thee, what religious person serueth me perfectly. He I say perfectly serueth me, who serueth me of pure loue, though he shew it not by so great works: for what euer is done for loue of me, I esteeme much, and will abundantly requite it. I make a greater reckoning of a good worke, though very little, proceeding from a burning loue, then of a great worke, accompanied with a meane measure of loue. Some weary themselves out with taking exceeding great paynes, but with very little, or no profit at all to themselves: for that the actions, though neuer so good, which be not sealed vp with the scale of charity, be not gratefull to me, and therefore they receiue not their hire: and if they be sealed vp with a little scale, their reward is also little. Others in seruing me seeke after their owne commodities, wherof when they shall see but a little hope, they pull their hand backe from their accustomed labours of seruing me, & do excuse the same through weaknes of body or of mind: but indeed there is nothing that maketh them afraid,

but their owne will, and the absence of those commodities they had hoped for.

5. He serueth amisse, who in seruing seeketh to profit himselfe: for such an one serueth not me, but himselfe, & therefore he doth in vaine expect any reward frō me. He that will not for loue of me discommodate himselfe, neither is my seruant, neither do I hold him worthy the name of a seruant. A good seruant is nothing afraid to suffer aduersities for his Lord and Maister, and this is to be truely a seruant. My Gospell denounceth, that a seruant ought to be not only faithfull, but also wise: for he is bound to accommodate himselfe to the will, & manners of his Maister, and he must not seek, that his Lord accommodate himselfe to his will. He cannot possibly serue another, who hath a will to liue at his owne pleasure, and as he listeth himselfe.

6. Many religious persons liue discontented with their lot in religion, and that they must not impute to me, but to themselves. For being blinded with the ouermuch loue of themselves, they will liue where they list, and exercise those functions and offices that likethem best, and not what the Rule, or Obedience shall assigne them: & if they be not pleased in their desires, they
fall

Religious Perfection. (Lib. 1.)

III

fall into passion, and leauing the narrow way, they enter into the broad way of this world, and do lay the cause of their inconstancy vpon others. It is not the part of a subject in religion to make his choice either of place, or of office, but it is in him to obey the Superiours ordination, will, and commandement.

7. A wise seruant only aymeth at this, that he may well and rightly conceive his maisters will, and willingly and diligently execute the thing that shall be commaunded him. And he is not so hardy, as to say, this or that office is not for me, this or that place liketh me, this exercise and not any other pleaseth me: for that were to vsurp the office of the maister, and not of the seruant, to seeke trouble and disquiet, not peace and quietnes. For how knowest thou, whether this, or that exercise be for thy soules good, or the ruine of it? How canst thou tell, that in the place thou hast chosen, thou shalt not meete with any tentation? Therefore a wise seruant doth with more consideration expect, vntill he vnderstand from his maister, where, and in what it shal please him to vse his industrie, paynes, and seruice. And though sometimes he may haue a thought, that this or that office will do him good, yet he

he desireth not, that it should be cast vpon him, because he knoweth not whether he be a fit man to discharge it. For it appertaineth to the Superiour, & not to the subject to iudge whether he be fit, or no. For it is not inough, that the office be good and fit for thee, but there is further required, that thou be good, and fit to exercise the same.

That a Religious person ought to make great reckoning of his vocation.

CHAP. III.

LORD, I should be euer foolish, willfull, and vntoward, if I should not esteeme of my vocation, which I doubt not, but is to be numbred amongst the heauenly gifts, proceeding from thine endles clemency. I should also be very vngratefull, if I should not continually render thy diuine maiesty thanks, for that without any desert of myne thou hast vouchased to cast thy merciful eyes vpon me, and among so many millions of men, to receiue me into an holy family of Religious persons.

2. So it is, my Sonne indeed, thou art to make an high esteeme of thy vocation, not only because it is my gift, but also because thou art admitted vnto it, not deseruing

but rather worthy of my wrath and indignation, procured by the peruerse conditions and manners of thy forepassed life. And if thou make no reckoning of so great and singular a benefit of loue, besides the punishmēt which is due to so extreme an ingratitude, thou makest thy selfe worthy to be spoiled of all the gifts, and graces bestowed vpon thee. For he is vnworthy of all benefit, who either acknowledgeth it not for such, or altogether refuseth it.

3. Besides that, sith it is vndoubted & certaine, that among all things which thou hast, nothing is more precious thē thy soule, and that amongst thy greatest affaires, that is the most important, which concerneth the euer sauing therof; it manifestly followeth, that, that vocation is especially to be esteemed, wherby a man commeth to saue his soule. And he maketh a great accompt of his vocation, who loueth it, admireth it, and most inwardly affecteth it. Neither is this enough (for he may not escape the note of an vngratefull person, who though he maketh a great reckoning of the benefit, doth neuertheless forget the benefactor) but to take away, or preuent the blot of an vngratefull mind, there needs both an hart, a tongue and deeds to requite the good turne, and benefit

benefit done thee.

4. If againe thou consider, whence I haue called thee, thou shouldst do thy selfe an iniury, if thou shouldst little regard so great a benefite for by calling thee out of the world, I haue deliuered thee out of an intricate and dangerous labyrinth, into the runnings and windings whereof the further a man shall put himselfe, the harder maketh he his owne getting out. For we see the miserable louers of this world being puffed vp but with a little smoke of ambition, and vayne glory, to hunt & range after honour and dignities, as though they were put forward, and driuen by the very furies of hell. And as often as this smoke driueth towards them, they please themselves, and become proud, but when it declineth them, their courage falls, they haue no hart at all, and giue themselves to sorrow & languishment. And yet all this smoke doth nothing, but fill the eyes of them who gaze after it, with tears and weeping, and their mind vvith bitterness.

5. Others taking the way of carnall pleasures, do precipitate themselves into such a madnes and frenzy, as they make no reckoning at all of either foregoing life, soule yea their supreme and only good, which is

God.

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God himselfe, so they may enjoy their cōtēment of a most fleeting and base pleasure. A carnall and sensual man hath neither knowledge, nor taste of matters appertaining to God, & therefore is ready and apt to exchange them for a short and little pleasure of the senses, in so much as no meruaile it is, though a blind man be deceived. Others not finding away how to forsake their honours and humane reputation, if they be once frustrated of their desires in that kind, transported with wrath and indignation, become more fierce and raging, then the very wild beasts, whils for reuenge of the very least iniury, they come to kill one another, and ouerthrow both families and cittyes.

6. VVho so euer is cruell towards his owne soule, is also cruell to others: for none hurteth his neighbour, who first hurteth not himself. Others sore oppressed with the yoke of wedlocke, are so sore afflicted, as they wish rather to dye, then to lead a life among so many and dayly molestations, troubles, & cares of children and family. An vnfortunate choice hath an vnfortunate conclusion. Others walke vp and down in a labyrinth, but yet fettered in a golden chaine, that is, with riches & wealth of this world, which torments them, as poore bond-slaues, both day and night

night and day, without giuing them any
truerest at all. To be fast bound with a cord
is a very sore punishment, whether it be of
silke, or gold. He is a foole, who casteth
all his affection vpon things, that in his life
time cause trouble and care, and at his death
sorrow and grieſe. Riches that are possessed
with loue, be forgone and left with grief.

7. Vnderstand further, my Sonne, that
the world, out of which I haue called thee,
is a Schoole, wherin humane lawes made by
men giuen to passions, are more regarded
then be the laws diuine. For in it is taught,
that the transitory and brittle goods, that
passe away and perish vnto vs with death,
are more to be esteemed, then be those, that
accompany vs to the other life, and do neuer
dye. In it the more fouly a man is deceaued
and offendeth, the more prone is he to sinne
still, and the lesse acknowledgeth he the
greuousnes therof. In this schoole the good
and vertuous are laughed at, the wicked and
reprobate be commended, and therefore it is
worſe then hell it selfe, where al the wicked
are reprobued, and tormented.

8. Now if thou consider, in what place
I haue put thee, thou shalt find many causes
of yealding me thanks for the benefit of thy
vocation. I haue placed thee in a religious
state,

state, that is, in myne owne house; the foundations wherof sith they belaid in Humility, all those that dwell in it, for the knowledge they haue of their owne weaknes and vility, do reioyce in the contempt of themselves, and had rather liue in obscurity, then be knowne; rather to be reprehended then commended. They reueng not themselves of iniuries done to them; but they willingly forgive them. Here they liue in a most pleasing tranquillity, and peace: there, *Myne and Thine*, that is the origen and fountaine of all dissensions, hath no place at all. All there do labour for the common good, al help one another: he that can do more, doth more: and all serue one another, & all againe serue God. There be many together without confusion, great variety of nations and of manners without difference of opinions & judgments; functions and offices so distributed, as one troubleth not another, and yet all ordayned for the glory of God, to the good of soules.

9. The keepers of this house be three sisters, most inwardly conioyned by fayth, fidelity, and the fast band of loue; whose office is to defend, and keep all those who dwell therein, from all calamities of this present life, and to secure them from the incursions

sions of enemies, both visible and inuifible. For voluntary pouerty exempteth a religious man from all trouble of procuring, conseruing, & increasing worldly riches, which are wont so to molest, and paine the rich mens minds and harts, as they leaue not vnto them a moment of quiet and repose. Againe Chastity delivereth them from infinite desires of the flesh, whose tyranny oftentimes groweth so great and outragious through the contentments of carnall pleasures, as it maketh the soule (Reason being brought in subiection to the lust of the flesh) a meere bond-slaue.

10. Finally Obedience exempteth a Religious man from daungers, whereinto they do cast themselues, who out of a certaine secret pride, desire to do all things by their owne will and iudgment, refusing to be aduised or counsailed by others, and by so doing cast themselues into the Diuels snares, who is the authour of all pride. He that hath vertue to guard him, hath security on earth, and is not without his reward in heauen.

11. Therefore vnderstand my Sonne, that the Schoole of religion is directly repugnant to the schoole of the world. For in that, is deliuered the manner and way of seruing
God,

God, by the obseruation of his precepts and counsailes : in it is shew'd vnto thee a most compendious and secure way of comming to the end whereunto thou art created. In it are discouered and laid open the frauds, and snares of Sathan, set by him for the intangling of soules, and thrusting them downe into hell. Of this schoole I am the chiefe maister, and gouernour, who do by inward inspirations shew vnto all men the way of perfectiō. In the instruction of the schollers of this Schoole, I obserue no difference of persons : for I haue no more regard of a Gentleman then of a Clowne, of a rich man then of a poore ; though I loue and affect those more, who do practically by their works manifest, how well they haue learned their lessons of humility, meeknes, obedience, and the rest of the vertues, which I both declared by example of my life, when I liued amongst you, and also dictated after my departure to my Euangelists, who did faithfully write them for the vse of posterity. He is no good scholler, who endeauoureth not to imitate his maister.

*How greatly a Religious man offendeth Gods,
who maketh light, reckonin^g of his
Vocation, and Religion.*

CHAP. IIII.

VV HITHER soeuer, Lord, I turne
my selfe, I find causes of feare. For
if I examine the benefit of my vocation to
Religion, I conceyue it to be so noble and
excellent, as I must confesse my selfe far vn-
able to render thanks for it. If I looke into
my selfe, I find so great an imbecillity, and
dastardy, as I am afraid least I should be dee-
med most vngratefull. Againe the greates
of thy maiesty confoundeth me, being such
and so great, as no satisfaction can possibly
be made vnto thee, but by a certaine infinite
loue, and seruing of thee, which is more then
I can, or am able to do. Who then would
not be afraid?

2. Out of question my Sonne, I besto-
wed a great benefit vpon thee, when I tooke
thee out of the stormy Ocean of the world,
and placed thee in the quiet harbour of Re-
ligion. It is also certaine, that of this benefit
there ariseth an obligation, and that by so
much the greater, by how much the benefit
was great. But for this thou hast not any
iust

iust cause to feare: sith I am he, who do communicate to all, competent grace and forces, towards the satisfying of their obligation, so they be not slacke and negligent of themselues, but do put to their owne helping hand, as much as they are able. And it is my māner of old to be rather more franke and liberall in bestowing of benefites, then seuerer in exacting obligations and debts.

3. Neither is there cause, that the greatness of my Maiesty should put into thee any feare, or confusion, so thou be not wanting on thy part in louing and seruing me; not so much as my worthines requireth, but as thine owne forces be of ability to beare, sith I haue neuer exacted more of a man, then he can well do. That person hath indeed iust cause to feare, who when he is able doth not what he ought, and is required of him to do.

4. There is but one thing for thee greatly to be afraid of, and that is, that thou offend not me thy benefactour by some greiuous sinne, who of my singular grace haue raised thee vp to so high an estate of holy life, and am ready to raise thee higher, if thou be not a let therunto thy selfe. That religious man offendeth me most of all; who thinketh that he may liue a more holy life in the world, then in religion, & that is the cause he

maketh so light esteeme of the benefit of his vocation. For he who affoordeth me little honour, respect, and seruice in myne owne house, will not doubtles yeald me greater where my enemies haue to do. This is a manifest and notable abuse and deceit, and the very origen of all perturbation. For if a man could serue me more perfectly in the world, I would neuer haue inuited him to religion. All good proceedeth from me: I with and countaite true and solid perfection to all, and I know best, what most profiteth and is necessary for euery one towards the attayning of his saluation.

5. A religiousman must not cast his eyes vpon that which best pleaseth him, and highly preferre it before another thing, as more excellent; but what shall please me. Those also offend me sorely, who when in religion they obtaine not all things as they list, or haue their part in some discommodities, do easily murmure, and as it were sorrowing and greiued that they haue forsaken the world, do thinke a religious life hard, and painefull. So were some of the children of *Israel* affected, when they were out of *Egipt*. For so soone as they began to want their former commodities, and to endure the troublesome labours of traauayling, they

they murmured; & reflecting vpon the flesh-pots of *Ægypt*, they wished themselves againe in their former bondage. I did not call them out to rest, but to take paines; neither did I appoint them recreations, and great commodities of life, but from the very beginning diligently inculcated, that many things were to be endured for Christ, & that the flesh is to be mortified, together with the desires therof: and this condition they accepted, and vndertooke to performe. What cause then haue they to complaine? And though none of all this had happened, yet if their Lord suffered so great matters for them, what great thing shall they do, if they also being seruants, shall suffer somewhat for their Lord?

6. A religious man, who is afraid to suffer any thing, looseth his reward, and because a man must needs suffer many things, if the labour and affliction be doubled, it maketh the burden the more intollerable. Others make light esteeme of Religion their Mother, for that they thinke themselves not bound to their religion, but their religion to them. But they are deceyued. For if they examine the matter well, they shal find that they haue receyued very many benefits of religion, and religion none at all by them. For

to be religious and Godsferuant, is so noble a gift of God, and of Religion, as it ought worthily to be preferred before all the good works, that are done for religion. For there is not any earthly dignity in the world, that may enter into comparison with the dignity of religious life. It is an argument of a base and vnthankful mind, if a religious person busie himselfe rather in thinking vpon the commodities that he hath brought to religion, then those that he hath receyued from it.

7. Againe that religious man displeaseth me not a little, who careth not how he imployeth the talent he hath receyued of me: for by that he manifesteth, what small reckoning he maketh of it, and hath no will to satisfy his office, when he may, & is able. How many be there, who being able to my great pleasure, do vndergoe some exercise for the good and helping of soules, but because they see they be not able to do them with so great applause, as some others can, they give them cleane ouer. Is not this an ambitious prid? Is not this to hide the talent vnder ground, which I gave him to make his gaine therewith? I cannot be ignorant, what is good and healthfull for euery one, and therefore I giue five talents to some, two

to others, & but one to another. And though to negotiate with one talent, doth not cary so great applause and credit amongst men, as to negotiate and trafficke with five, yet it is not so with me. For I consider not, how much every one negotiateth, but how well and carefully. And if to negotiate with the help of many talents, should redound to the soules good of many, and to the greater glory of my name, it would be a worke worthy of commendation.

8. But this is that which I find fault withall, that many haue a desire to haue many talents, and much negotiation, that they may be the more admired at, and the better esteemed of men, whiles to me, the authour of all good, they leaue either no place at al, or very litle. My beloued seruants did not so at other times, who ascribed the imperfections and lapses to themselues, and the fruit of their good works to me, & that they might transfer the praise and glory of all their labours to me, they would be said to be vnprofitable seruants: for the commendation of an excellent worke returneth not to the instrument that wrought it, but to the craftsman himselfe.

9. Sonne, of the contempt of thy vocation, or religious profession, there groweth
to another

another euill, and that is a negligence, or carelesnes of attayning the end of thy vocation, and a neglect of obseruing the rules of thy proper Institute. And this vice offendeth me so highly, as I am forced euen to punish such persons in this present life. I abundantly afford them health and strength of body, witt, and all helps both naturall & spirituall, that they may cheerfully hold on in the course of vertue which they haue begon, and at length come to their prefixed end. And if they by neglecting and contemning all this, reape no fruit of their good works at all; what meruayle, though like vnto the accursed fig-tree, that did indeed beare leaues, but yet no fruit at al, they sometimes decay, and wither away. The trees that I haue planted in a religious garden, ought continually to yeald the fruite of good workes; els as vnprofitable, they are to be accursed, and being once withered are to be throwne into hell fire. For whosoer worketh not well, whiles he is able, shall not escape unpunished, when he would.

*Of the tentations, and daungers of
leauing ones Vocation.*

C H A P. V.

S O N N E, the gift of thy vocation to a religious life, is a precious ieuell, which hath no place on Earth, nor is it procured by friends, or obtayned with money, but commeth downe from Heauen from the Father of lights, and is of so great a price & worth, as nothing in this life may be compared to it. The property of this precious ieuell is most worthy of admiration. For by it owne bright shining light it sheweth vnto religious persons all the down-falles and daungers, that be in this present life: which because secular men, who are destitute of the light of this diuine gemme, cannot see or discover, they otherwhils stumble and fall very sore. It further layeth open all impostures, tentations, and trecheryes, that the enemy of mans saluation vseth for the intrapping and vndermying of soules.

2. Againe this light is so cleare, as it maketh entrance euen into Gods hart, and vnto Religious men layeth open Gods will touching their owne state: and in the execution of this will of God, Religious Perfection consisteth. Who vseth not the benefit of this light

light in his way to saluation, walketh not in security, and though he fall not, yet he must needs many tymes tryp & stumble. The vertue also of this noble Gemme is of no lesse reckoning, the is the brightnes. For it giueth great courage & force to those, who labour towards heauen (whence it also commeth) against the enemy both visible & inuisible; who seeketh to stop vp the way thitherward. For it animateth the Religious to ouercome all difficultyes that occur in the spiritual way.

3. This gemme hath yet another condition, that the longer it is worne & vsed, the fayrer and perfecter it becommeth. It can neuer be taken from a Religious man, to whome it is once giuen. It cannot be lost vnles he hath a meaning of himselfe wilfully to cast it away. If then a Religious man should make light esteeme of this ieuell, should he not be worthy severely to be punished? And should he not deale iniuriously with his benefactour, if he should forbear to vse the vertue and efficacy of it? For he is accompted no lesse vngratefull, who vseth not the benefit bestowed vpon him, then he who acknowledgeth it not, or disesteemeth it. This gemme as it is defended with three vowes, that guard and keep it; so is it besieged by three cruell enemies, who seeke continually

not in initially to steale and take it away. The first
e must is the World, who putteth man forwards to
he ver- eeke after riches and vanities. The second
no lesse stic Flesh, together with the desires, and
giueth the whole route of sensuall pleasures. The
labour third is the Diuell with his proud suggestiōs
neith) a proceeding of selfe loue.

4. My Sonne, that thou mayst not loose
o great a Treasure, thou must needs haue
three things. The first is Vigilancy or Cir-
cumspēction, for that whiles a man sleepe
in the field, cockle is easily sowne amidst the
good corne: and he that is not considerate
and wary, easily falleth into the enemies
mines. The second is a singular affection to-
wards the iewel of this thy Vocation, that
thou mayst loue it more hartily then thyne
owne life: for the better it is loued, the more
carefully is it kept. And because it is so ex-
cellent, as it bringeth thee to God, and to e-
ternall felicity, nothing ought to be more
deare vnto thee then the same, as there is not
any thing found in heauen or in earth, that
is more excellent then God, or everlasting
saluation. The third thing necessary, is that
thou place this Iewel so fast in thy hart that
thou suffer it not to be taken from thee by
any aduersity, or pleasure, or for the respect
of any creature whatsoever, & if any should
go

go about to spoile thee of it, that together with it he must take away thy hart also.

5. Besides these, there be some other things that hurt a Religious man, and dispose and prepare him to the ouerthrowing of Gods calling in him. In the first place thou must earnestly endeauour to mortify and roote out the bad habits thou hast brought out of the world, before they thrust thee from the state of religion. For like vnto bad plants in the ground, they sticke fast in the most inward parts of the mind, and become to be so strong in time, and so great, as they in conclusion choake vp the good seed of thy vocation, that they may obscure, and take away the bright shining of this heavenly margarite. Whosoever in religion retayneth his peruerse habits of the world, sufficiently manifesteth, that he hath not wholly abandoned the world. The horse running out of the stable, and carrying his halter with him wherewith he was tyed, by often stumbling will be easily taken, and brought back againe into the stable: euen so a Religious man, running out of the stable of this world, if he draw his old manners & customs with him by often stumbling easily yealdeth to temptations, and is brought backe againe into the stable of the world, out of which he had

runne

runne. He profiteth nothing by his running away, who runneth away halting or tyed.

6. It also much hurteth a Religious man, and in tyme throweth him downe from the state wherein I have placed him, to make little reckoning of lighter faults & defects, which do by little and little quite overthrow him, and bring him into a certaine loose, & hurtfull liberty of life, where-with the true spirit of Vocation cannot haue coherence, which in all things both little & great requireth obseruation. He can neuer be secure, who whiles he may, freeth not himselfe from his enemies, though they be neuer so little. An house before it falleth giueth some little signes of the future ruine, which if the owner preuent not in time, it soone after quite falleth to the ground: So a religious man, if he do not in the very beginning provide a remedy against little faults & defects, that are found and obserued in him, stumbling will in time shake and weaken all his vocation: and bound fast in such kind of bands, will leade a miserable life out of Gods house. Who healerth not vp his wounds in good tyme when need is, repenteth himselfe with his owne greater hurt afterwards.

7. Those also suffer great detriment in their vocation, who discouer not their tentations,

tations, nor defects to their Superiour. The thief flyeth away as soon as he is discovered, but whiles he is not knowne, he neuer giueth ouer, till he hath stollen some thing: Euen so a Religious man, as long as he concealeth from his Superiour, what it were fitting for him to know, giueth an occasion to the infernall thief of robbing him of the precious Iewell of his vocation. He that discovereth not vnto the Phisician the quality of his diseale or sicknes, either vnderstandeth not the greiuousnes therof, or maketh light reckoning of any cure.

8. O how much deceyueth he himselfe, who ouer confidently thinketh himselfe secure in his vocation. This presumption ariseth of nothing but this, that he doth not sufficiently examine and consider his owne imbecility, and who he is. For the more exactly a man looketh into himselfe, the more he feareth, and the lesse confident is he in his owne ability. And this is an excellent remedy for the procuring of strength and courage against all tentations. But he that is more confident in his owne industry then is meete, easily turneth his backe in the very beginning of the encounter, and abandoneth the Colours of his Religion. The more a Religious man presumeth of himselfe, the

lesse

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lesse he doth, because presumption is the daughter of pride. But he who feareth, doth the more, because holy feare is the daughter of Humility, which euer moueth vs to worke well.

9. Moreover a Religious man is decceiued, and is not far from daunger of leauing his vocation, who thinketh, that he may be able to do more good in the world, then in Religion. For who is not good amongst the good, & amongst so many examples of good persons, and in an holy place, how will he do good in a bad world amongst the bad, where so many bad examples will be presented euery day vnto his eyes, and where so many occasions be of liuing naughtily? With these fraudes the diuell vseth to draw the vnwarie Religious man into his net. For when he shall once haue perswaded him, that he may do more, and more excellent works in the world, he forthwith suggesteth that no great reckoning is to be made of the state of Religion, and so in conelusion driueth him from his vocation. It is the Diuels property to deceyue vnder pretence of good, who neuer casteth out his booke, but that it is euer bayted to catch Religious persons.

10. Neither be they in lesse daunger, who by a certaine careles drowfines waxe

by little and little cold in spirit, and in my seruice, and though they well find and perceiue this in themselves, yet they neglect to put it away. When a sick mans feet, or hands become so cold, that they cannot recouer heate, it is a signe, that he is in extremity and neere vnto his death: So a cold Religious man, if he take not paynes to recouer his heate and warmth of spirit, is not far from dying spiritually; & from daunger of loosing his religious life. Who will not be holpen, when he may and can, how can he be secure of obtayning help at all times?

That it is not enough for a Religious man, to be called, f. Goa to Religion, but he must earnestly labour to the perfection of his Vocation.

CHAP. VI.

LORD, I giue thee most hartly thanks for this precious stone, that thou hast purchased to send me downe from heaven, when as pittying me, thou calledst me to holy Religion; and I ascribe all the ioy and spirituall comfort, which I receiue heerby in consecrating my selfe to a Religious state, to thy goodnes and clemency.

2. My Sonne, if thou dost this, and no more

more besides, thou comcest too short of thy duty. For vnles besides these things, thou endeavour by good and holy actions to arriue to the perfection of thy vocation, instead of being rewarded thou shalt be punished. To be called to religiō, & to weare the habit, increaseth the punishmēt, vnles not by words, but by works thou answer so many and so great benefits of myne bestowed vpon thee. He that after benefits receiued of me, neglecteth to profit in vertue, doth not only incur the note of ingratitude, but doth further, as it were, bind my hands fast, that I giue or bestow no more vpon him. Men do ordinarily make a coniecture by the outward habit and cloathing, whether one be Religious or not; but I iudge by the inward.

3. O how many do dwell in Monasteries, and weare a religious habit, and be not indeed religious, as be al those who haue not wholly giuen themselues to the exercise of a religious life, and of solid vertues, but do partly serue God, & partly the world. Contrariwise there be many in the world, who weare a secular habit indeed, but yet in affection be truly Religious, and do exercise vertue; in so much, as it is not the habit, nor the place, that make a true Religious man, but the inward hart and mind, and the ex-

ternall works which do manifest the same.

4. What doth it profit a man to be notably well armed, if at the time when by commaundement of his Captaine Generall he were to fight with his enemy, he should not use them? The tree that yealdeth no fruit, is to no purpose suffered to stand in an orchard, sith it is for no other end planted there, then for the bearing of fruit. I haue taken vp all religious persons to serue me in my warre, & haue giuen them weapons and armes, that they may use them, as I would haue them. And therefore whosoever glorieth in the name of a Religious man, and sheweth not by deed his loue towards me, nor doth conformably to the spirit of his vocation yeald me spirituall fruit, he doth not the office & part of a Religious man.

5. O how far are they deceiued, who thinke themselves to haue discharged their duty well, for that they haue entred into the state of religion, and continued therein, often reckoning the number of the yeares, which they haue liued in it, & not examining how negligent they haue beene in the exercise of pious works, and how little fruit and profit they haue reaped by their labours & paynes. The number of yeares maketh not a Religious man happy, but his good works, and the
exercise

exercise of vertues. To glory of the great continuance in religion, and to be deuoid of vertue, and the perfection therof, is no commendation at all, but a reproach and condemnation.

6. The scholler, that hath frequented the Schoole for many years, is not to be therefore praised, but he that hath profited in the schoole, and is become excellent for his learning. If thou wouldst consider that thou art to giue an accompt of all the tyme thou hast mispent in religion before my Tribunal, thou wouldest not brag of thy selfe, but lament rather, for hauing, like a fruitles tree, occupied the place of another, who might with greater profit haue yealded me much fruit.

7. In like manner he also deceyueth himselfe, who being entred into the gate of religion, thinketh it inough, if he transgresse not Gods commaundments, and is not offensive, or scandalous to any. But he is wholly deceyued, neither am I content therewith alone: for he who thinketh he may make a stand heere, doth not a little offend me. He ceaseth to be a true religious man, when he beginneth to haue a will not to be better.

8. A good religious person neuer thinketh

himselfe to haue ariued to perfection, nor euer sayth, *Now it is enough*. For he knoweth that in the spirituall life, not to go forwards is to go backwards. It is my will, that a religious man mortific himselfe conformably to his Institute, and exercise himselfe manfully in all those things, that be therby prescribed or commaunded. This if he do, he answereth his vocation, and for this end haue I called him to a religious state. And who seeth not that he performeth very little or nothing at all, who when he hath means to do much good for his owne soule, and for Religion, doth of set purpose let all alone? Who againe seeth not, that he is far out of the way, who thinketh himselfe to satisfy his vocation & institute, if he find himselfe to haue a will to do no euill?

9. Tell me, I pray thee, what that mariner meriteth, who being hyred to help in the time of navigation, should thinke that there were no more for him to do, the not to be troublesome to any in the ship? or when there were occasion to hoise vp the sailes, or let them downe, or to fight with pirates, should sit still & looke vpon others? Should not he deserue, as an vnprofitable seruant, I say not, to be only thrust out of the ship, but also to be cast headlong into the sea? Even so
should

should it be with a religious man, who being admitted into a religious ship, vpon no other condition, then that he should exercise himselfe in the functions of religion, should giue way, or place to idleness, which in all Congregations hath euer been a thing scandalous. Neither can it be said, that an idle person doth no euill, because he doth euill enough, who doth not what he ought. This man then if he be not thrust out of religion, nor be cast into the sea of this vnhappy world, as he well deserueth, cannot yet escape the finall sentence of Gods severity and iustice. The punishment that is deferred, is not taken away, or lessened.

That a Religious man must attend, and haue an eye to those things, which be proper to his owne Religion, and not of another.

CHAP. VII.

Sonne, I am he who haue from the beginning gouerned my Church, and still do, because it continually fighteth & standeth in battaile for the mayntenance, and defence of my honour and glory. And though it consist of diuers parts, yet haue I so knit them together in one body, as they make a well ordered army, seruing happily vnder

my Crosses standard. And in this my Churches army the Squadron of Religious men marcheth in the vanguard, whose charge it is with the invincible help of spirituall armes to gayne & make a conquest of the kingdome of Heauen. This battalion according to the diuerſity of Religions, hath differēt colours, and yet all haue their directions from me the Generall of the whole Army. Euery religious man also must serue vnder those Colours, and in that Company wherein he was first entolled, euen vntill his death, and must exercise himselfe in those armes that are proper to his order, or religion. It helpeth much, if he be well affected to his owne Order. For the souldier that is well affected to his colours, doth not easily chang or forsake them, but when need is ventureth his life also for the defence thereof.

2. Though all Religions commonly ayme at this, that they may make their subjects perfect in my seruice, yet euery one hath certaine proper and peculiar exercises, wherby to become perfect in their one: and this is the speciall end and scope, that all those who imbrace the same, ought to propose vnto themselves. For example: they who imbrace the religion, that professeth a solitary life, remoted and retired from conuersation

nerfation with men, as is that of Ermites, ought to labour to become perfect in cloathing, in dyer, in contemplation of heavenly things, and in the praifing of God. And fuch as haue entred into a religion that profelleth an aetive life, that is, to help their Neighbours both fpiritually and corporally, ought to profit in the exercife that is proper to an aetive life, that is, in exercifing charity to their neighbours, with as much paynes and care as they are able, without any the leaft regard of their owne comodity, but meerly for my glory, knowing that whatfoever they fhall do to their neighbour for love of me, they fhall do it to me, and that I will be their reward for it. The fame muft they alfo do who imbrace a religion that attendeth to Contemplation, that they may the more entirely vnite themfelues with God their maker; and that alfo which mixeth Contemplation with Action, fuch as be commonly Religious of the begging Orders.

3. And thefe particuler exercifes can neither be well done, nor continued long, vnles they that praetife them, endeavour to that perfection of life, that is common to all religious perfons; that is, vnles they feek and labour to deny their owne will, to mortify their fenfes, and to contemne themfelues.

For of these vertues, as of foundations, the speciall and proper exercises of every Religion do consist, and are by them supported. He that is good, & perfect in himselfe, may easily help othersto become good also, which he cannot wel do, if he shal not be good himselfe. For he, who hath no care of his owne perfection, cannot wel promote it in others. Who is naught to himselfe, to whome will he be good?

4. O how ill doth that Religious man vnderstand the forme of his Institute, who pleaseth himselfe rather with the exercises of another religion, then with those of his owne. Therefore to different states of Religious I haue imparted different gifts & graces, that every one may execute his owne function and office aright. Whence it is, that he, who hath not receiued, or hath not the true spirit or free gift of his owne religion, cannot satisfy the office he beareth in it. If I would haue had a religious person tyed to another exercise, I would also haue called him to another religion, and would haue given him the proper gift thereof. But if I haue called him to this Religion, it is nothing fitting, that he meddle with another. For he, who leaueth the functions of his owne religion, and taketh vpon him those

those of another, shall not satisfy the one nor the other.

5. He that professeth a solitary life, doth no little matter if he attend to himselfe, and he doth wisely, if he leave the care of helping his neighbours to others. Wherefore that religious man much please me, who addreth all his thoughts, and all his paynes to the scope he hath proposed to himselfe, and to the functions of his owne religion, and for the compassing thereof laboureth to overcome all difficulties, by auoyding those things, that may hinder him, and by imbracing againe those things that may help him to the obtrayning of the same end. He doth much, who laboureth to do what he is bound vnto, & which agreeth with his profession.

6. There is an other error also obserued in some Religious persons, who from the very beginning of their conuersion determine and assigne vnto themselves some peculiar end, but yet little conforme to a Religious state, and that is, that they may become great Philosophers, Deuines, or Preachers, and therunto directly and indirectly they employ all their cogitations and studies. It cannot be said, how hurtfull this intention is, seing it bringeth in the obliuion of a good and religious life, and the contempt of his owne

owne rules and institute, and which to say in one word, is the Seminary of infinit vanities and troubles. For if the superiour commaund any thing to such kind of men, who hath little correspondence with their end, they instantly refuse to obey, they murmur, complaine, and are afflicted therfore. Again if the Superiour, because he would not contristate them, suffer them to hold on the course they haue inteded, behold there forthwith followeth the breaking of a most excellent order, & therewith the ruine of themselves and their Religion together. For nothing in a religious life is more pernicious, then to leaue vnto subiects the power of doing their owne will. Where there wants obedience and subordination, there necessarily followeth confusion, and disorder.

7. I haue often said already, that he cannot be my scholler, who mortifieth not himselfe by the abnegation of his owne will. I am the way, I am the guide: who followeth not me, the further he goeth, the further is he off from the marke. This way held all those ancient Religious men, who do now enjoy the supreme felicity in heaven. For they in the beginning imbraced that which was proper to their vocation, and in other things they suffered themselves to be directed.

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And governed by their Superiours, my
Substitutes and Vicegerents heere on earth.
And he that doth otherwise, deceiveth and
harmeth himselfe.

8. Finally they are deceyued also, who
seek to accomodate the proper institute of
their religion, the end, and ministeries ther-
of, to themselves and their owne will, & do
not, as they ought, rather accomodate them-
selves vnto it. Such be they, who will needs
exercise these or these functions, both when
and how they shal themselves deeme fitting,
and bestow as much tyme, or as little in the
as shall best please themselves. This is not
the direct way: for seeing they be the mem-
bers of Religion, is it fit, that they accomo-
date themselves to the whole body, that is,
to the Religion, and not contrarywise the
Religion to them. Arrogancy and Pride
will in conclusion, when he least thinketh
therof, overthrow that religious man, who
accommodateth not himselfe to his Super-
iour.

*Wherein doth it consist, to be a true and
perfect Religious man.*

C H A P. VIII.

ORD, as often, as I consider the many
good purposes, I haue made of louing
thee

thee withall my hart, and of seruing thee with my whole affection al the dayes of my life, I thinke my selfe to be religious, & that truly, though I am afraid I may be deceiued. For when I call to mind, what my forefathers haue done, what great things they suffered for the loue of thee, what payne they tooke for the purchasing of vertue: and on the other side considering with my selfe how little I haue hitherto done, for the gayning of the same, and how little I haue endured for the glory of thy name, I seeme not to my selfe to be a perfect, or true Religious man.

2. Sonne, there be many who in their owne opinion be religious, and that true & perfect also, but there be very few indeed. For perfection is a certaine vniuersality of all vertues, which in truth is found in very few. Some there be, who thinke they haue gotten the name of Perfection, if they dayly say so many Psalmes, or so many payre of beads, if they fast some dayes in the week, if they punish their bodyes with haire-cloath or disciplines; and if they should omit al this they thinkethemselues to come far thort of perfection. Good and laudable be all the said actions, but yet in them consisteth neither the summe of spirituall life, nor a religious

gious mans perfection, but in true and solid vertue, inherient in the soule.

3. These externall actions be in some, as it were the meanes and instruments, apt for the attayning of spirit and true deuotion, so they be vled with moderation, such as is agreeable to beginners. In some againe they be the effects and fruit of the spirit, or of spirituall perfection, as in the Proficient and Perfect, who by that seuerity of pennance do subdue the rebellion of the flesh, that it may not rise against the spirit, and by frequent prayer they stir themselves vp in the loue of God, that they be cuer conioyned, and vnited to him: though in some also those outward mortifications of the body (if the perfection of vertue should be wholly placed therein) may giue an occasion of ruipe, as whiles they proceed so far in mortification of the outward man, as they neglect the inward, that is, the restrayning of the motions & perturbations of the mind. And it comonly happeneth, that such manner of men be willfull and stiffe in their owne iudgment, and such as would seeme to teach all men. And where humility is not, there can be neither a true spirit of God, nor true deuotion and piety, and therefore a most rare thing it is, for such to be amended: seeing he is

is hardly brought into the right way againe, who thinketh himselfe all this time to haue runne in the same. And a manifest sinner is with more facility conuerted, then a secret one, who hideth his indiscret actions vnder a cloake of vertue.

4. Know this my Sonne, for certaine that, that Religious man is more deare to me who restrayneth, and mortifyeth all his bad desires, then he who giuing the raynes to his inordinate appetites, continually fasteth, weareth haire-cloath, disciplineth himselfe to the bloud. He can neuer recover his health who applieth not a remedy to the place where the euill resideth. Wherefore to ease thee of the doubt, which thou hast in this matter, I will giue thee a most cleare looking glasse, wherein the forme and proportion of a true and perfect Religious person is to be scene, wherewith if thou wilt compare thy selfe, thou mayst easily ghesse, whether thou beest like it, or no, & shalt vnderstand with all what is wanting in thee.

5. The Poesy of a perfect Religious man is *To do*, and *To suffer*: for in these two words is comprised all the perfection of a Religious man. *To do*, signifieth nothing els, but that a true religious man ought so to order his life, as he may satisfy the charge & function he oweth

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oweth vnto God, his Superiours, his Religion, his Neighbours, to himselfe, and to other things created. And To suffer, all the actions of a religious man do manifest, whether he exerciseth them for the increase of my glory, or for the promotion of his owne commodity: whether they haue their beginning from a true spirit, or rather from humane prudence.

6. That Religious man satisfieth God, who louing his Creatour aboue all things, diligently obeyeth his precepts, and Evangelicall Counsailes, magnifieth him with all his hart; prayseth him in aduersity as well as in prosperity: accepteth al things from Gods hands, as gifts from heauen; would choosc rather to dye a thousand deaths, then to offend his Creatour in the very least thing, or in any thing to go against the precept of his diuine will. Finally whatsoeuer he doth, he doth it for the amplifying of my glory and honour.

7. A perfect Religious man satisfieth his Superiours, who at the very least signe of their will, doth promptly and cheerfully obey them, as if it were the voyce of God, not as men, but as Gods Vicegerents. Them he reuerenceth and loueth as the fathers and pastors of his soule, by me appointed ouer him,

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interpreteth

interpreteth all their ordinations & actions in good part, and modestly defendeth and purgeth them, if he heare any murmurations against them.

8. He also satisfieth his religion, if he do what a good sonne performeth towards a most deare Mother, who doth not only honour and loue her, but also as often as he perceiueh her to require his paines and seruice, is ready at hand, & willingly offereth himselfe to beare the burden, whatsoever it shall please her to lay vpon him. He is glad if men report, and speake well of her, if they report ill, he labourerh with modesty to defend her good name. Finally he hartily wisheth, and beseecherh the diuine Maiesty, that she may euer proceed, and hold on in the spirit of Humility, and Deuotion.

9. Again he declareth himselfe to be well affected towards his brethren, and religious persons, whome he loueth from his hart, and reputeth their good, or euill to be his owne. He thinketh and speaketh well of all: he pittiyeth the defects of euery one: he seeketh to edifie them also euen in the very least things, and in what he is able helpeth them, especially in matters appertayning to spirit.

10. The obligation of a perfect religion to

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A religious man extendeth it selfe also to the men of the world, whome he satisfieth when he truly wisheth vnto them, as to his neighbours eternall felicity, and loueth them as himselfe. And if he see the bad example of religious men hurtfull vnto them, he useth all meanes that no occasion or example of scandal be giuen vnto them by himselfe, and in all his conversation laboureth to be exemplar, and ouerslippeth not any occasion of doing them good for their soules health.

II. A good religious man is bound to performe something towards himselfe also, as he is Religious: and this debt he satisfieth if he diligently beat downe his owne desires contradicting reason: if he mortify the wantonnes of his flesh, if he contemne the world together withall the vanities thereof: if being moued out of a loue to me, he mortify himself in al things, & seek not after his own glory, but myne. For if he haue no regard of his owne estimation, he is then come to perfect and absolute victory over himselfe. he gaine if he keep his body in subiection to the vnderstanding, and yeald it nothing but what is necessary: for so doing he shall leave the soule a free passage of mounting vp to heauen. To be short, being dead to himselfe and to the world, he shall liue to me, his

12. Lastly a perfect religious man satisfieth other created things also, if he convert them to his owne vse, so much only as is requisite, and no more. And because he cannot be ignorant, that God hath committed them vnto vs, as far as they may be an help vnto vs for the attayning of our end, let him only loue those for his owne vse, that may further him to his said end, and reiect the rest, that may hinder him. For by so doing a true religious person may of the creature make himselfe a ladder to clymbe vp into heaven.

13. The other word appertayning to a religious mans poesy, was to suffer. Al men at their first entrance into a religious state, do promise willingly to suffer, but few there be that discharge the same truly, and for that cause come not to any perfectiō. And by this word of *suffering* is meant, that a religious man is by suffering purged, and perfected, and that none can be perfect in religion, but by suffering much. Therefore in holy Writ perfection is compared to an Hill, to the top wherof none can come, but by labour and difficulty.

14. A perfect religious man murmureth not against God, if he send him sicknes, persecution

secutions, or other calamities, but giveth the
father of mercies thanks for them, as for gifts
comming from heauen. Neither complay-
neth he against creatures, saying: This man
hath done me a great iniury, that other hath
sued me against all equity, right or reason,
another man exerciseth his malice and ha-
rred towards me: but as one desirous to suffer
when any aduersity hapneth, he accepteth it
for a singular fauour of Gods benignity to-
wards him. And this is the way of drawing
forth and getting good out of euery euill.
Whiles a religious man taketh any thing in
all part for me, it is a signe, that he caryeth
a greater respect of loue towards himselfe,
then to me.

*Of the inward defects, that be impediments
to Religious Perfection.*

CHAP. IX.

Sonne, after the wound giuen to thy first
parent Adam long since in the terrestriall
paradise by Sathan, all the powers and fa-
culties of the soule became so languishing,
faint, weake and decayed in his posterity, as
that euer since they haue disposed man
rather to lapses and vices, then to the loue of
vertue. Hence haue proceeded all the diffi-
culties, imperfections, and impediments,

which we dayly find in the spirituall life, which doth so molest and trouble vs in the way of perfection, as they either disturbe & hinder it quite, or at least lay a barre against it, that it succeed not so well.

2. Wherefore that we proceed more slowly to mount vp to the perfection of vertues, wheron is placed the seate of Religious Perfection, in the first place this is the cause, that we do not seriously resolve with our selues to haue a will to vse all our forces to get vp to the top of this mountaine: and this proceedeth of nothing else, then that we do not effectually labour to get perfection. He that effectually desireth health, careth not what medicine be giuen vnto him: This defect is such, as it cutteth off cleane all hope of arryuing to perfection. For he that hath not made a firme purpose to hold on in the way to perfection, will hardly begin to pace towards it: and he who beginneth not, how is it possible for him to come to his prefixed end? And he that is so affected in mind, when he neglecteth the occasion of doing well, will either do no good at all, or will fall to what is worse.

3. O how great a losse of spirituall gaine sustayneth that religious man, who prolongeth his iourney in the way of perfection!

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He will no doubt at the houre of death better vnderstand this error then now he doth: for in that exact and last examen of his conscience, he shall more clearly see, that he had no iust cause of differring the exercise of vertues, but that it was pretermitted of him through his owne meer carelesnes and negligence. And his grief and confusion will at that time be the greater, the more he had his part in my inspirations, wherby I did so often inuite him, stir him vp, and sollicited him to perfection.

4. There is another impediment also to a Religious man, that maketh him with the more difficulty to labour to perfection; because he apprehendeth it for an ouer great difficulty to obtaine victory ouer himselfe, and to ouercome the bad affections of his mind. But as delay made without cause, deiecteth the mind, and very much hurteth a man: so an effectuall, and cheerfull resolutiō of vndergoing a thing, greatly helpeth towards the ouercomming of any difficulty.

5. Son, if thou wert the first of those who should enter into the way of this warfare, thou mightst haue some cause & excuse, but since there haue been so many, who though sometimes ouercome, did yet in the end victoriously get vp to the top of the hil, thou

canst pretend no cause of excuse at all, or of pardon. For the obtrayning of a victory and Crowne it is not inough to fight, but a man must go away also with the victory.

6. There is yet another vice, that bindeth vs from getting vp to the mount of perfection, for that we are fettered in fast bands at the foot of the hill. And whosoever is so tyed, he may indeed moue himselfe a little, but mount vp he well cannot. That Religious man is much deceiued, who preposterously affected to some humane thing, thinketh that he may arriue to perfection. For whereas he holdeth his hart, fast tyed with the cord of affection to some thing created, he must needs either mount vp the hill without an hart, which is not possible, and would not be pleasing to God; or els without life with the thing created, to which he cleaueth fast, which God would neuer indeed tolerate, who hath neuer suffered any thing to be beloued togeather with himselfe. For sith he is of himselfe, & of his owne nature good, his wil is also to be beloued alone by himselfe. The Creatour cannot loue him, who against his will transferreth his loue to a creature.

7. An impediment also to the same ascending, is the ouer sore burden, that a man layeth vpon his owne shoulders. For wher-

as he must go an hard and painefull way, the more he is surcharged and loaden, the lesser and shorter journeyes maketh he, and otherwhiles he is stayed in the midde way, and cannot go any further. Wherefore a religious man, who intangleth himselfe in many affaires and employments that nothing concerne his vocation, will either trauaile slowly towards the mount of perfection, or will be forced to stay in his way thitherward, because the strength of his spirit is weake, the way painefull and vneuen, and the dispositions of his mind estranged from such a journey, or rather inclined to the contrary. A Religious man hath inough to carry his one burden, which if he shal increase with other mens cares, no meruaile though he yeald and fall vnder the burden, and oftentimes come to that misery, that he is not able to beare his owne, and much lesse anothers.

8. Finally it is not the least impediment of getting vp to the top of the hill, for a Religious man to be moued with too much commiseration of himselfe. If one haue a dull horse, and out of pittie dareth not give him the spurre, probably he will not come to the end of his journey. I like not of a religious man, that is ouer nice and delicate, who least he should put his body to some paines, laboureth

boureth not to perfection, as he should do. The souldier, who hath ouer much care of sauing his life, and an horrour of the daungers of war, doth ordinarily but make vp the number, & giueth no increase to the strength of the army at all: for when there is occasion presented him of shewing his valour & courage, he runneth away for feare.

9. The Religious, who are now crowned in heauen, did not so. For though they were of a weake body by nature, and had accustomed it to all manner of ease and delicacy, yet after they once became Religious, for the attayning of perfectiō, they punished it with fasting, pennance and mortification, and so with commendation and merit attained to that which they sought for. That religious man, who fauoureth his body more, then meete is, loueth it too much, because he knoweth not how to loue it truly, like vnto an ouer mild Phisitian, who by his curing increaseth the sicknes.

Of other outward defects, and imperfections, that be impediments to Perfection.

CHAP. X.

SONN, in some Religious persons there be found other imperfections and defects, which as they do no lesse hinder Perfection, then

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then the former, so be they no lesse displeasing vnto me. The first is, that they will not labour to perfection by the common and ordinary way, but do berhinke and deuise another new way, vnkowne to their forefathers. But they erre very sore in the matter: for where it is of it selfe very hard & painfull to get vp to the mount of perfection, the paine would be doubled, if a new way besids the ordinary be to be taken: neither doth the crafty enemy seeke any other thing, then to hinder a mans endeaour of climbing vp, by adding a new labour and paine in doing it. Who goeth on in the beaten way, trauiyleth securely: for that they who went before, by their example shewed the security of it, and of this security he hath no signe at al, who goeth and seeketh out a new way.

2. O in how great an errour be those Religious persons, who reiecting and neglecting the ordinary spirit of their owne Religion, do follow and imbrace another particular, & strange spirit. This is to go a new way, both with more labour, and lesse profit. For it commonly hapneth, that such men whiles they find not an end of their way, being ashamed of themselues, are forced to go backe againe, or els do fall headlong into some pittfall or other. That religious man
cannot

cannot beguided by Gods spirit, who refuseth to keep the way, which all those that went before him held. I haue appointed to euery religion a certaine and determinate way, ordayning to that end peculiar laws & constitutions, declaring the manner and meanes, how euery man may come to his iourneys end. He therfore, who shall neglect his way, and go another, doth plainly giue to vnderstand, that I haue not instituted euery religion wisely inough to content him. And heere is to be seene a notable deceit, and tricke of the Prince of darknes, who leadeth the negligent and vniuersary religious persons out of the common way of their owne institut, that when they are once wearyed in it, he may cast them downe headlong to their further ruine.

3. A second defect is, that they will not vse the guide, whome I haue giuen to direct them in the way without errour. For that trauaylour is not without cause deemed temerarious and rash, who goeth his iourney without a guide, which he knoweth, by reason of the many turnings and by-ways, to be subject to many daungers & strayings out of the way. I am the guid, who to al religious men do shew the right way to perfectiō. And I do it by Superiours, & spiritual Fathers,

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Fathers, whome I haue appointed in euery religion. Wherefore it is no meruaile though they, who will not suffer themselves to be gouerned and directed by their Superiours and ghostly fathers, but follow their owne iudgment, stray out of the way, be spoiled by the cues, or fall into misery and ruine. So hapneth it vnto those, who before they be schollers, do professe themselves to be maisters, and so by a secret pride, whereby they contemne their superiour whome I haue designed for their directour and maister, become schollers of the Diuell, who is the captaine and chief leader of all the proud.

4. A third defect there is, arising of humane respect; namely, that some be ouer solicitous to gaine the good will and fauour of all. Is the care of a religious person to please men, and not to displease the world? Vpon what true ground, or reason can he seeke after the worlds fauour, who hath once so earnestly abandoned and giuen over the world? I called him therefore out of the world to religion, that he might not seeke any thing, but to please me alone, & in that way to hold on towards perfection. If by the help of this world a man might be brought to a perfect state, a religious man might also vse the benefit and help therof: but it is not so. For the

the world followeth a far other profession, and intertayneth other manner of cogitations, then those of attayning spiritual perfection. Who studyeth, and hath a care to please men, is no disciple of mine, neither pleaseth he me, nor do I intertaine him for my seruant.

5. A man can serue but one maister, with true loue. And if he would deuide his hart into two parts, let him not determine to offer me the one of them: for I will in no sort accept it. If thou hast so great a desire to please men, wherfore didst thou leaue them? O miserable religious man, who when thou liuedst still in the world, didst not only not hunt after the fauours of men, but also didst not any thing that might obscure thy good name and estimatiō; but after the time thou hast imbraced a religious estate, thou burnst with a desire of pleasing men, in so much as thou art not ashamed to do many things, vnworthy thy vocation and condition, and which is worst of all, grieuously also to offend me, least thou shouldst perhaps offend men. Wherfore then, my Sonne, doest thou vaunt, that thou hast trodden the world vnder foot, if thou hast so earnest and longing a desire to please it? Seest thou not, that by the care of gayning the grace of other men, thou lookest

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loosest the peace and quiet of thy mind? This is not, I must tell thee, the way to the mount of perfection, but to the downe-fall, & pite of eternall damnation.

6. There is yet another impediment in attayning to the perfection of vertues, to wit when a religious man obserueth no order or good proceeding in his spirituall actions. An army, though neuer so great, complete, and prouided of all necessaryes, if it be not well ordered, either when it marcheth, or when it ioyneth in battaile with the enemy, shall neuer get the victory: So a religious man, who must contend and fight for the getting of Perfection, that is seated vpon an high hill, and compassed with all complete armour of vertues, if he obserue no order in all his spirituall exercises and actions, which be as it were so many souldiers, shall neuer go away with the victory.

7. There be some, who before they haue layd the foundation of humllity, begin to raise their spirituall building. Others againe before they be past the Purgatiue way, think they may be most inwardly conioyned, and vnited with me. But this is not the way & course of comming to perfection. Humility must be procured in the first place, and from a passage must be made to pennance, and by

by it the mind and conscience is thoroughly to be cleansed. It is not inough for him, who falleth into the myre, to rise out of it, vnles he also wash away all the durt: euen so it is not inough, that a religious man hath renouced, and forsaken the world, and to haue gotten out of the sinke of sinne, but he needeth further to extirpate his bad inclinatioſ, and hurtfull affectioſ and propensioſ, which remayne as staynes behind in the soule, and in place of them by the help of my illuminating grace to plant most beautifull vertues: so doing he may aduenture to become most inward, and most familiar with me.

8. Lastly, an Inconstancy in spirituall life stoppeth vp, and debarreth the entrance not only to perfection, but also the meanes of compassing any vertue at all. For there be those, who endeavour often to get vp to the mount of perfection, but they still fall down againe into the valley that lyeth vnder it, because they are more prone to abandon and giue over the thing they haue once begon, then they be manfull to go through with it. O how much shall they be afflicted for this their inconstancy, when the houre of their death shall be at hand, when the Diuell shall vpbraide them with this, that they did
indeed

indeed with great fervour wrest from their Superiours, frequent exercise and vse of prayer, fasting, disciplines, and other mortifications for their profit of spirit, & for their helps to perfection; but afterwards they did none of them at all, or very little.

9. If a Religious man had as great loue to perfection, as he should haue, he would euer aspire and labour to it, neither should there occur any difficulty, that might terrify him from compassing it. But because his loue languisheth in the thing it selfe, whence that inconstancy groweth, he easily relenteeth, and recoyleth. A Religious man, doth not only suffer the losse of time by tryfling thus, but also becommeth worse every day, then other.

How Perfection is finally to be attained.

C H A P. XI.

L O R D, if it be so hard and painefull a matter to arriue to perfection, by occasion of so many defects & impediments, that stop vp the way; I see not how I, that am most weake, can come thither, or overcome so many difficultyes with my most slender forces. Sonne, he that resolueth seriously & hartily to labour to perfection, doth most certainly arriue vnto it. So many Religious

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men in former times most perfect, who now enioy their euermlasting felicity in heauen, were me like ynto thee, & had the same difficultyes that thou hast, and much greater, & yet they manfully and constantly ouercame them, and thou mayst do as much, if thou wilt. Neither shalt thou want my grace and help, as they neither wanted, so thou resolve vpon some thing, as they did. Neither must thou be discouraged and recoyle for feare of the difficultyes that will encounter thee, especially seing there be as many and more meanes, wayes, and remedies for the removing and taking away of those difficultyes, and procuring of perfection.

2. The first remedy is, with an inward affection to imbrace perfection, & earnestly to labour therein, sith for the ouercoming of all the rockes of this mountaine there is nothing better, or more effectuell then the affection of loue. Neither is there any thing that inciteth a Religious man more to continue on his way, and to labour to perfection, then the same. Of loue there then followeth a desire, and care of vsing and frequenting those meanes, that be necessary or profitable towards the attayning of perfection. And study, care, & diligence do help very much towards the more speedy com-
passing

passing of what is desired or loved. Of the same love groweth constancy and perseverance, whereby spirit, life, and hart is given a religious man to hold on, and to prosecute his labours, and of this next followeth the victory, and crowne. To him who loveth nothing is hard, no nor the overcoming and gayning of heaven; and the getting vp to the top of the mount of perfection.

3. A second remedy, and meanes to the attayning of perfection is, to haue a consideration and regard euen of our very least imperfections. Some are wont, when they fall into such manner of imperfections, to breake forth into these, or the like words: It maketh no matter, it is a thing of little moment, it is nothing: and these men be the very bane of religion. For of this contempt they become in time bold, temerarious, rash, & by their own bad example they draw others to a certaine pernicious and dissolute liberty. That must not be held in light esteeme, that displeaseth me: neither ought it to be thought a small matter, which I commaund, or forbid, though it be not great indeed in it selfe. And know thou, my Sonne, that the very least imperfections please me not, & for that cause I haue forbidden them. Know thou further, that the religious man who maketh a conscience

to transgresse or offend in the very least things, is debuered from greater imperfections. For all the great ruine, and breaches of good order and discipline, that are found in religion, haue receiued their beginning of smaller faults. Who shutteth his eyes at a light fall, will also shurthem at a greater, because that prepareth the way thereto, that is, a smaller to a greater.

4. A Third, and very good means also is, for a man to mortify himselfe in the very least things. For religious perfection comprehendeth all vertues; all which a man cannot be possessed off, vnles he get a full & absolute command ouer his passions & senses. And a man commaundeth his passions, if he restrayneth them so soone, as they raise themselves against the reason, or against the laws of religion: neither must he also yeald vnto the senses euen in the least matters, more then is fitting to his religious estate. For he who condescendeth to his senses, beyond the mediocrity of vertue, soone findeth them rebellious; and he who doth not resist his inordinate passions in the beginning, becometh a slave vnto them in the end.

5. A fourth meanes and way to perfection, not only auaylable, but also necessary, is, that a religious mans mind cuer conspire

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and accord with his Superiours will and desire in all things. For all helps haue their origin from me, which are needful towards the attayning of perfection, & them I ordinarily communicate by the Superiours, by whom I do enlighten and gouerne my subiects. Whereupon such a one as is separated from his Superiours, wanteth such kind of gifts, and helps. And more then that, he is separated from me; and therefore no meruayle though he fall often, be troden vnder other mens feet, be contemned, and pyne way and languish, because he is a dead member cut off from the head. It little auayleth the scholler to go vnto the schoole, if he be not one with his maister, by whome he may be directed in his course of learning and studyes.

6. Finally, it helpeth not a little to perfection, if these wayes be practised, not with tediousnes, & heauines of mind, but with promptitude and alacrity. For this alacrity profiteth much to the overcoming of difficultyes, which the body apprehendeth and feeleth in the attayning of vertues: it confoundeth the enemies that oppose theselues in the way of perfection; and maketh the paines of the journey the lighter, and more easie to be endured. And which is more, this promptitude and alacrity, wherewith a religious

ligious man serueth me, plealeth me much, because it hath the beginning of loue alio. And to conserue this spirituall ioy and cheerfullnes in mounting vp to this hill of vertues, a man must haue companions in his iourney. It cannot be said, how much vtility and profit a religious man receyueth by the company and conuersation of the good, by whose speech, and example he may be excited and stirred vp to deuotion, sith nothing there is, that in humane life hath more force to moue a man to perfection, then the example of good vertuous companions.

7. Wilt thou, my Sonne, be wise? Conuerse with the wise. Wilt thou be perfect? Liue with them, who loue and seeke after perfection. Therefore I haue prouided, that in euery state of my Church there should euer be some holy and exemplar men, who by their examples, as by lights set on high in a candelsticke, might giue light vnto others. Whereupon a religious man, whyles he compareth their life with his owne, easily perceyueth, how little he hath profited in the spirituall life, and by a certaine holy emulation stirreth vp himselfe, to vse more diligence for the time to come in the exercise of vertues. If good examples haue more effect

to moue then words, whosoeuer profiteth not by them, doth manifestly declare that he hath a will ouermuch propense, prone, and addicted to euill.

Of the spirituall ioy which accompanieth a religious man, that attendeth to perfection.

CHAP. XII.

SONNE, the spirituall ioy, and contentment, that a good Religious man hath after he is entred into the narrow way of perfection, is no doubt great, and singular, as on the contrary, the grief and heauines of hart that oppresseth a bad religious man, holding on in the broad way of imperfections, is hard, disgustfull, and bitter. Whereupon the one and the other beginneth in this life, to haue a taste of that which is prepared for them in the other, either punishment, or reward. Lord, I know not, what I may answere to this: for I see many Religious men to imbrace the broad way, & not to labour greatly to come to perfection, and yet to be very iocand, cheerfull, and merry.

2. Son, thou art decciued. For in the way of liberty, and where no obseruation of discipline is in practise, there is not any true or solid ioy, though it may seeme to be such. A

Religious man who liueth at his owne wil and as he pleaseth, displeaseth others, and he oftentimes is cast downe with grief, & pen-
suenes, because he cannot haue what contenteth him. True ioy hath the scate in the mind, and ariseth of the peace and tranquillity of conscience, which is felt within; which cannot be in the religious man, who leadeth a free and dissolute life, because his mind is day by day, as a sea, tossed and tumbled with the surges and waues of perturbations & passions. Woe be to a religious man, reioycing in his imperfections.

3. There be others in religion, who runne the way to perfection after their own will; neither vse that moderation in mortifying themselves, that were to be required. These men do often stumble in their way, because they preiudice and hurt their health, and yet they ariue not to that holines of life, whereunto they labour. And whereas they be destitute of ioy and comfort, both from within and without, all the fault is ascribed to ouermuch deuotion, which is no such matter. For it is not deuotion, that causeth either infirmity, or anguish of mind, but indiscretion, and that more is done and vnder-taken, then reason dictateth, or I require. None can be either his own guide, or iudge.

4. But

4. But true peace and ioy, is to be found in those religious men, who do with due moderation attend to perfection, & practise the meanes of coming vnto it, by the aduise, direction, and precepts of Superiours, and Spirituall Fathers. For what way soeuer they turne themselves, they euer find occasions of being glad, and of reioicing spiritually. If they conuert themselves to me, they haue no want of consolation, because they know well inough, how much it pleaseth me to see a religious man, labouring earnestly towards perfection. And if there were not any thing els in this life, it were and ought alone to be inough for a religious man, to passe over his life in an exceeding ioy. For a seruant cannot haue any greater pleasure and contentment, then to vnderstand, that all his offices, and seruices be pleasing vnto his Lord. And if they turne their eyes to their Superiours, they experience the same by tranquillity of mind. For seeing they be studious and desirous of perfection, they must needs be quiet, peaceable, obedient, most obseruant of Religious discipline, and consequently in high esteeme and beloued of their Superiours; which if they once get knowledge off, they cannot but reioyce greatly.

5. Now if we looke vpon others, with

whom they liue & keep company, they haue no cause of grief at al. For seeing they attend to the exercise of vertue, they hinder or hurt none, but haue a care to do good to all, as to themselves, and therefore they intertayne peace with all: and where peace is, there is true ioy. And more then that, vertue maketh them amiable, not only to their friends, but to their enemies also. For the vertuous are beloued, honoured, and respected of all, in so much that a religious man can neuer want internall consolation and comfort. Againe if they consider themselves, they cannot be without consolation also. For it is proper to vertue, wherein they exercise themselves, to worke with pleasure and taste, and therefore needs it must be, that true Religious persons reioyce in all their actions: yea they find consolation in their tribulations, and persecutions, when they be ready for loue of me, euen to suffer and endure the paynes of hell, if it could be without their owne faule and would be for my glory; and not only that, but all the aduersities and miseries of this world besids.

6. Finally the meditation of death, which stricketh a feare and horroure into others, to good religious men is an occasion and matter of ioy, not only for the reward,
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that they expect, but because they shall then haue their part of that exceeding and surpassing consolation, which they attend for at the houre of death, for the care and desire, they had in arriuing to perfection. For the soule will at that time be exceedingly glad, neither shall she be able to find an end of rendering thanks for receyued benefits.

7. There is but one thing, that can make a good Religious man sad, & that is, if he fall into some imperfection. But this sorrow cannot be of continuance, because it is instantly taken away by the vertue of penance, and the fault cancelled by contrition, and vpon this the mind is put againe in possession of the former tranquility. Tell me now my Sonne, who peraduenture makst but little esteeme of perfection, in what other thing mayst thou find so great and vniuersal a contentment of mind? What thing can secure thy mind more, or better, then the desire of perfection? Considerest thou not, that to labour & attend to perfection, is nothing els, then before hand to take an essay, & that of eternall felicity? Thou must needs be vniuersally if thou robbe and spoile thy selfe of so great a good, that thou need not take any paines in restraining and conquering the desires of thy flesh, and senses. And this
madnes

madnes will appeare the more euident vnto thee, when there will not be oportunitie for thee to do that, which now thou shouldst do. Happy is he, who shall in that last agony be able to say: Whatsoever good I could, or ought to do, that, by the fauour of Gods grace, I haue done in my life time.

Of the great paynes, and myseries, that Religious men do suffer, who forsake and leaue the way to Perfection.

CHAP. XIII.

LORD, if the discomending of a bad religious man be in the same measure, that is the commending of a good one, I make no doubt, but he liueth in very great affliction of mind, for abandoning and giuing over the way to perfection. So it is, my Sonne, and so much the worse, because they acknowledge not their owne infelicity. Every euill is wont to be the more dangerous, the lesse it is knowne: for if it be by carelesnes neglected in the beginning, it increaseth, & by little and little gathereth so great force and strength, as in the end it exerciseth a command ouer all. O how much doth a bad religious man hurt himselfe! who transported, and carryed away by an ouer great liberty of liuing, looketh not into himselfe, that

that he may vnderstand, whence so sore perturbations & afflictions which he endureth in religion, haue their beginning .

2 . If he turne himselfe to me, he is ashamed: for he knoweth, that he was called out of the world, to lead a separated, retyred, and perfect life : and he knoweth how many benefits I haue bestowed vpon him; & how great comodities I haue giuen him towards the prosecution and practise of vertue. And that by neglecting them, he hath left off all cogitation of labouring to perfection , and seeketh alwayes to liue at more liberty , and to satisfie the allurements of the senses. He offendeth me as much , as his ingratitude is hatefull vnto me, whence such a life proceedeth . These be not those pious and good purposes, that he made, and gaue testimony of, at his first entrance into religion: neither is this the way that I taught him, & wherein I walked my selfe . Neither can he but know in his own conscience, that this his life (which is far from that of a religious man) discontenteth me greatly. And therefore he is against his wil, inwardly tormeted with most bitter stings of conscience, though outwardly he shew it not; and when time cometh, shall receiue his deserued punishment . The seruant, who is priuy to his maisters will, & doth

doth it not whiles he is able, if he be not a very foole, meriteth severely to be punished for it.

3. If he hath to deale with his Superiours, he is much afflicted, and troubled. For sith he is neither obedient, nor loueth religious discipline, it is not in him to keep common peace with them, and therefore it must needs be, that many things be in like manner done, that be one while discontenting to himselfe, and otherwhiles to the Superiours. Besides that, the poore & compassionate Superiours be grieved, not knowing how they may deale with him, that he may be holpen. For if they deale fauourably & after an indulgent manner with him, he being accustomed to liberty, abuseth their gentleness, and becometh the more proud. If they handle him with more severity, by forcing him to do his duty; then as one impatient of so hard discipline, he shaketh off the yoke therof, and troubleth the Religion. If any thing be commaunded him, he refuseth to do it: if pennance be inioyned him, he complainerh and murmureth. That he liue so still amongst the rest after his owne will, is nothing expedient: for the longer the custome of doing ill is continued, the worse it maketh the man, and by his bad example
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he hurteth & misleadeth the more. Whence it followeth, that a Religious man, who contemning the desire of perfection, liueth disorderly, and maketh no reckoning of intertayning peace with Superiours, must needs be troubled with a continuall heavines, and bitternei of mind. Certes, he cannot but be bad, & become euery day worse then other, who contradicterh and resisteth his Superiours and betters.

4. Againe, if he turne himselfe to other Religious persons, amongst whome he liueth, he findeth no comfort at all. For if he perceiue, that the wise & spirituall brethren make very little reckoning of him, & shun his conuersation and company in what they can, he cannot but be much troubled & moued in mind, and therfore is forced to keep company with his like, who be desirous of a more free and disordered life. Neither can he yet receiue any solide comfort from them, for that where the spirit of deuotion is not, there neither peace nor ioy can be of continuance. The friendship of the bad is not long lasting, and is euer suspected: and where suspition raigneth, the mind is euer in suspence and doubtfull, and therefore he cannot possibly be truly merry.

5. Finally, if a bad religious man turne his
his

eyes vpon himselfe, he hath no cause of reioicing, but of lamenting. For sith he hath no part in true vertues at all, he hath none to direct him in his actions, nor who may defend and help him in his temptations, and so he becometh prone to fall, yea & to apostasie also. Againe, what ioy can he haue, who must take great paynes without hope of spirituall profit? As long as he is in religion, he must needs exercise himselfe in the ordinary offices of the same; which because he doth vnwillingly, or with loathing, murmuring, and other imperfections, he looseth all his merit. Besides that, what comfort can he haue, who receyueth a tormēt in wholsome and meritorious actions? Who wanteth spirit, and cannot be holpen? if he be to pray, he is in paine; if to heare a sermon, or some pious, and spirituall talke, he loatheth it; if discourse about the purchasing of vertue, he may not endure to heare it. O miserable religious man who drinketh gal, when others tast of most sweet hony! It is a signe of death, when the sick person becometh the weaker by receiuing a medicine.

6. Moreouer in enduring tribulations, he is so much the more afflicted, by how much lesse he was armed, & prepared against them; like vnto a little boate, when a sore tempest ariseth,

ariseth, wanting both oares & sterne. By one thing alone he may seeme he may be eased of all his troubles and miseries, and take some poore refreshment and quiet, and that is by death. But death, vnles he want the vse of reason, will rather increase his feare, and terror. For the sooner it shall come, the sooner shal he be presented to my Tribunall, to giue an accompt of euery moment spent in religion without spirituall profit. For death is to the bad & wicked the beginning of more heauy punishments.

That a Religious man ought with great confidence to labour to the attayning of Perfection.

CHAP. XIII.

LORD, if I should mount vp to the tree of vertue, to gather of the sweet fruit of Perfection, I find not where I may stay my selfe. For the tree is very high, and my forces very weake, my nature is afraid, my body conceyeth an horroure of it, and if it be pressed forwards, it kicketh and refuseth, and therefore I am forced to stay vpon the ground beneath, because it is impossible for me to get vp higher. But tell me, Son; how I pray thee, can it be said to be impossible, whenas all religious, as many as be now in heauen,

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and

and many more, who be still liuing on earth, haue not without their exceeding great commendation, mounted vp to it, and gathered of the wished fruite of perfection. Yet I must confesse, that some came to the height of it more speedily, and some more slowly, some with more merit, & some with lesse. And therefore for euery one that hath a will, it is heither impossible to follow them, nor very hard: if thy forces be not sufficient, thou hast my help at hand: if thy industry and cooperation be not wanting, my grace shall not faile thee.

2. To get vp to the height of this tree, and to gather the fruit of perfection, is to get the victory: and to obtaine the victory, a man must needs carry himselfe manfully. To statues and pictures may a scepter & crowne be giuen, though they neuer come to the battaile, but not to a reasonable creature, and free, to whome the crowne of vertue is his reward, and the reward is not giuen without merit, nor merit without encounter precedent and gone before. If then thou aspirest to the crowne of vertue & the perfection of it, thou must needs prepare thy selfe to the paines, & to the fight, as others haue done before thee. He knoweth not what a reward is, who expecteth it without labour & paines.

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Seeing then the hope and confidence of attaining perfection, relyeth not only on the help of my grace, but on thine owne cooperation also, thou must of necessity on thy part performe the conditions, that I am now to set downe. First, necessary it is, that thou haue a true and sincere desire of labouring to perfection: for this desire is not only the foundation of the aforesaid confidence, but also helpeth to the furthering of thy progresse & going forwards, to the overcoming of difficultyes that euer and anon occur vpon the way, and to the mitigating and easing of all the paines. Sonne, experience sufficiently teacheth, that he who hath not a desire, seeketh not, and that he who hath a great desire of a thing, seeketh it earnestly. Again, putting thy confidence in me, begin thou with courage to exercise the actions, now of this vertue, now of that; for by so doing thou shalt extirpate all thy bad inclinations, and in place of them plant in thy mind all the most beautifull fflyes of vertues. And though I am accustomed to lend my helping hand in this busines, yet know thou that I otherwise try a Religious man, by the withdrawing of my help; that so his constancy may appeare, and how great a confidence he

harb in me. *How much is a Religious man de-*
ceiued; who if he peradventure stumble in
the middest of his course, intended to the at-
tainning of perfection, by falling into some
imperfection, or finding himselfe not to pro-
fite so much in vertue as he desireth, fainteth,
and is quite discouraged: & diffident of be-
ing able to arriue to perfection, neglecteth to
hold on, or to proceed any further: and of
this it cometh to passe, that after that he gi-
ueth himselfe far more free scope to runne a
disordered course of life, then euer before.
This is not the way to get the victory, nei-
ther is it an argument & signe of a valiant &
noble mind, but of a faint & cowardly hart.

5. Certes, that way-faring man should
 be deemed mad who would not hold on the
 journey he had begon, or should go backe a-
 gaine, because he trypped and stumbled once
 vpon a stone, or had had a fall: for that were
 nothing els then of a small euill to cause a
 greater. But the wise & wary trauayler dorth
 not so, but if peradventure he slippe, or haue
 a fall, he presently riseth againe, & continu-
 eth his journey forwards: and of this fall he
 learneth to be more wary and heedfull for
 the time to come, that he fall no more. The
 very like hapneth amongst religious men.

For

For when one vnwary and vnprovident
falleth into any imperfection, he neither
hath a care or desire to rise againe, neither is
he vigilant to preuent a fall against another
time. But when a prudent & spirituall man
falleth, he sodainly getteth vp vpon his feet
again, and if he should fall an hundred times
a day, he would rise vp againe an hundred
times, and would be sorry for his falls.
Whence it is, that he is not only not dismayd
but he also doth with greater earnestnes, care
and endeauour by the exercise of vertues,
hold on his way to perfection. And this is
of euill to draw out good.

6.. Those Religious men be also decei-
ued, who thinke the exercise of vertues to be
laborious, painefull and hard, and therefore
for feare of preiudicing and hurting their
health of body, they let courage fall, become
pusillanimous, or like vnto skittish horses
will not go forwards with spurring, but do
resist, & kicke. These men would (torsooth)
runne on to the reward of vertues without
any their owne paines taking, and with the
enjoying of their accustomed recreations:
but truly the nature of man is not so fruitfull
a ground, as to yreld forth fruit of it selfe
without husbanding & manuring: neither
is the condition of vertues so comtemptible,

as a religious man ought not worthily to renounce his owne commodities, and the pleasure of his senses, that he may attayne to the perfection of them. It is selfe loue, that thrusteth a man into this deceitfull conceit, that he haue a greater regard of the temporal commodities of his body, then of the spiritual ornaments of his mind. Who fauoureth his body ouer much, thrusteth vertue headlong out of his owne soule.

317. There be found other Religious persons, who forbear to profit in the study of perfection, because they haue a conceit, that I will not affoord them so much help and assistance, as is to be required to this study: and this opinion is worse then the former. What is this els, then for them to offend me, and to decriue themselves? For not to put their confidence in me, is to do me an apparent injury, as if I knew not how to help them, or could not, or would not. It is nothing so, I desire nothing more then to help, neither do I euer withdraw my interball inspirations, or other meanes, for the stirring vp of them to perfection, And for this end I haue taken & drawn them out of the world. How then can any be destitute of my help? How can he be diffident of my grace, sith I continually stand and knock at the doore, that

that may be let in, and help every ones necessity? If they will with this cloke cover their cowardize and slouthfulness, they are deceiued, because they lay it much the more open. He that layeth his owne fault vpon others, sinneth double.

8. So it is, Lord, it is not thine, but our fault, that we go not on to perfection. For sith thou art most wise, thou knowest the ways of helping vs, because thou art omnipotēt; thou art able also to do it; neither art thou vnwilling, because thy will is goodnes it selfe, and therefore all the fault is entirely and absolutely ours:

That nothing in the world should diuert a Religious man from pursuing after Perfection, and getting therof.

CHAP. XV.

Sonne, a faint harted and fearefull souldier will neuer set his flagge vpon the enemies walls, for that ouer much feare causeth him either to keep himselfe aloof off, or if he beneere, to turne his backe, and therefore he deserueth not any reward, neither is held in anyesteeme with his Generall; and more then that, is contemned for a coward, & one without hart, of his fellow souldiers.

I would not haue my seruant ouer bold or temerarious, and rash, nor yet ouer fearefull. I desire he should be magnanimous, and constant, and not be afraid where no cause of feare is. Let a religious man, who sayth that he will not hold on in the course of perfection, tell me, what it is, that causeth him to make a stand, and to giue ouer: not for that his paines and endeauours be to no purpose, sith we haue said already, that many haue arriued to perfection, & I am ready at hand to help all with the assistance of my grace. Truly if Religious persons were as ready to embrace and lay hold on the help, that I offer them, and by their owne industry to cooperate with my grace, as there is desire in me to affoord it, there would be a far greater number of perfect persons; then now there be.

2. Neither is the power of the enemy so great, as it may hinder, or draw a Religious man from the way of perfection. For though the enemy be powerfull, yet if the Religious man haue a will, he may not only be not overcome or hindred by him, but it is in his power also easily to overcome him, sith his power and might consisteth only in tempting, and not in overcoming and hindring, vnles a man would willingly of himselfe

selfe be hindred or overcome by him. The enemy is weak inough, who hath no power giuen him of overcoming, but of such as be willing to be overcome, and therefore it argues a base mind in a man, who suffereth such a one to preuaile against him. And he who tempted by the enemy, falling not, maketh a great gayne in spirit, for that by such exercise he becometh the more couragious, stout, and the more constant; and trusting to the help of greater strength, he proceedeth on to perfection, which is nothing, but to gayne perfection it selfe. For the more often a souldier hath tryed his manhood in handling his weapons, and in the more warres he hath serued, the better souldier is he reputed, and the more experimented.

3. Neither must a good Religious man, for the mockings, & taunts of the imperfect or negligent, cease to hold on, & continue in the way to perfection: for that were to regard more the speeches of the bad, then my inspirations, that are intended for his soules good. O how much do they displease and offend me, who with their pestilent tongues do bite, and detract those Religious persons who take exceeding great paines about the attayning of perfection, and say, that they make ouer much hast to the height of san-

ctity, or ayme at ouer high matters that they may haue the greater fall after. And there want not those, who be not afraid to say, that for a man to giue himselfe to deuotion, is nothing els, then to hurt his health, to surcharge his head with melancholy, and to make himselfe quite vnable for the seruing of God. Meruaile it is, that such men do not consider and see, how much hurt they do by these their poysoned speeches, though the same may seeme to be vttered in iest. And whiles they do not well themselves, nor suffer others to do well, they do seeme to performe the office of the Diuell. These be truly enemies, false brethren, the ministers and instruments of hell, whose help Sathan vseth about either the hindring, or quite overthrowing of the pious endeauours of other religious men.

4. He that hath a desire to kill his enemy by poyson, vseth the help of one of the same house, or familiar with him. O vnhappy and miserable seducers, who do neither discharge their owne office, nor yet suffer others to satisfie theirs: O how vnlike be they vnto those, who first serued me in religion: for they exhorted and encouraged one another to the study and practise of vertue; and by example of life, and pious talke stirred vp

to the loue of God, & animated one another to the mortification of their passions, and to the contempt of themselves, that so they might come to that perfection, which they proposed vnto themselves, and sought for.

5. But suppose, that a religious man, after counsaile, by the iudgment of his Superior, or of his ghostly Father, giuen about exercising vertue with discretion, become sicke thereby, how great an hurt is this? What hurt should therof come vnto him? I, that am his Lord, will haue it so: and what if I by this way thinke to deliuer him from a far more soare sicknes of soule? Do these men thinke, that if a pious and good religious man fall sicke, I am forthwith displeased with him? None do displease me but the imperfect, who the more healthfull they be in body, the more gricuously do they oftentimes offend me. A sicke Religious man, so be he deuout, is more gratefull to me, then one in health if he want deuotion, for as much as he giueth good example in sicknes, and exerciseth vertue, neither wherof is to be found in the whole vndeuous person: and therefore a religious man desirous of perfection, when he is sicke, before me sustayneth no losse of any thing, because I pay my souldiers their ordinary wages alike, both in time of sicknes

sicknes and of health.

5. A spirituall disease, growing of imperfections, bringeth great hurt, & not that sicknes of the body, of which good religious persons oftentimes make a singular profit to themselves. If when the body were ill and sicke, the will should be infirme and sicke also, so as the sicke man could not merit any more, his hurt should be somewhat, & none could but haue iust cause of flying from such a sicknes. But it is rather the contrary, and therefore my Apostle said, *That when he was infirme, he was the stronger: and that vertue was perfected in infirmity.* My Sonne, wilt thou do a thing that may do thy soule good, and be pleasing to me? Auoid these ill meaning detractours, as thou wouldest do venemous serpents: and know thou, that if thou contemne what they maliciously calumnyate, and attend to the loue of perfection, thou shalt increase thine owne glory; because I, for loue of whome thou doest this, will in most liberall manner reward thee.

6. Some againe will not follow the way of perfection, because they see but few to walke therein: but this is no iust cause, that a busynes so fruitfull, and laudable, should be omitted. What skilleth it, whether thou hast many or few companions, in so most pleasant

pleasant a iourney? Ought it not be inough for thee, that the way is good, secure, and bringeth to a most happy end? Not to have many companions in walking the way of perfection, doth rather increase thy commendations and merit, then diminish it: yea thou oughtest to reckon it for a singular benefit in that it hath hapned to few. There be also few elected, though many be called: and many runne in the race, & but one wynneth the prize. If thou canst be one of the number of those few, & merit a precious crowne, why forbearst thou to runne?

7. He that labourerth out of lone, is not sollicitous about the company of others, but it is inough, that he be not wanting vnto him, for whose sake he taketh the paynes. I am he, for whose sake all religious persons runne the race of perfectiō. I am their guide captaine, and companion. I help, ease, and defend them, & this alone should be inough for them, to continne their iourney with a stout, able, and willing mind. Neither must thou meruaile, that this way is traced of few, because they be few, who mortifie themselves in earnest, who restraine their desires, and contemne the flattery of the senses, & many there be, who suffer themselves by delightful allurements of this world to be carryed
away

a way into the spacious & broad way, which no man, but knoweth how repugnant it is to a Religious estate.

8. Moreover there be some, who permit themselves to be withheld from the commendation of this perfection for human respects, and the commodities of fortune, which is nothing, when to be, notably injurious to vertue, whose property is to be an ornament to a religious man; whereas contrariwise human respects, and all temporall commodities are to be troden vnder his feet, and contemned. He then who leaueth those for these, doth necessarily put vertue vnder religious mans feet, and raiseth humane respect vpon his head.

9. Again he that more regardeth the worlds estimation, and riches thereof then perfection, whereunto I daily exhort all religious persons, doth me an injury, and himselfe hurt. For all know, that he who shall be ashamed of me before men, I will also be ashamed of him before the Angels of God. But what absurdity, and folly is this? They, when they liued in the world, out of a desire of following perfection, did forsake the world, the temporall commodities thereof, and all humane things besides: but now hauing embraced religion, they will giue due perfection,

perfection, to follow the world. Is not this a manifest folly? And sixth humane respect is nothing els then a certaine vaine feare, least a man be discomended in some one or other of his actions; how is it possible, that a religious man, desirous of perfection can be discommended? Can there any greater glory befall him in this life, then if this may be affirmed & said of him? And what new thing can happen to a religious man, if he be contempned of the world? Doth he expect any reward or recompence from it? Or is he afraid, least it would censure him by a condemnation? It maketh no matter, whether a religious man be loued or hated of the world; but it auayleth much, if he be deare to me.

10. To conclude, others forbear to tread this way of perfection, by reason of the repugnance that mans nature findeth in practising the meanes, and for the difficulties that the body maketh trial of, in tracing the same way. But these men misse the marke: for to be a true Religious man, or to walke on to perfection, is nothing els but to mortifie the desires of the flesh, and the perturbations of the mind. And therefore, if thou forbear the exercise of vertue, least thou incommodate or hurt thy body, thou louest thy selfe too sensually,

sensually: neither do I see, what difference there is betweene thee, and a delicate secular person. Remember Sonne, that these be not the promises thou madest at thy entrance to religion: for then thou didst purpose with thy selfe to suffer many things for me, to chastise thy body, to serue me, and for loue of religious perfection to deprive and spoyle thy selfe of all humane consolation.

That a good Religious man must not content himselfe with whatsoeuer degree of Perfection; but must labour, and aspire to a greater.

CHAP. XVI.

SONNE, those religious men do not satisfy me; that aspire to a mean degree of religious perfection, vnles they also ayme at the highest. For so I declared vnto my disciples, when I exhorted them to be perfect, not as the Patriarcks, and Prophets were, nor as the Seraphims, and other the Angells, but as my Father in heauen. O how doth that Religious person please me, who like the couetous man is desirous of true vertue, and perfection. The couetous man hath neuer his fill: for the more he hath, the more he desireth. And I would haue religious men
such

such followers of spirituall couetousnes. For it is a signe of a base mind, if a man, when he hath meanes to attaine to greater perfection, do propose vnto himselfe, and thinke vpon lesser. But I desire to haue my seruants valiant, and generously minded, who aspire to great and hard matters. For if I haue created them to an end, the most excellent in the world, & haue raised them vp to so high a state, that is, to be Religious; why should they not with all their possible forces labour to perfection, that would be most contenting to vs both? Who cooperateth not conformably to the benefit receiued, is iniurious to the Benefactor.

2. Let him tell me, whosoever hath no care to arriue to any great perfection, but thinketh it inough to haue had a tast thereof, whether he would so deale with his body? Is he contented it should enioy a mediocrity of health, when he may haue it perfectly strong, sound, and lusty? Would he with but a poore meanes of lyuing, and not the best? If then of all earthly things, which serue the body we choose the best, most perfect, and all in great quantity, number, and quality the most excellent, why should we not also for the souls good, which is the mistress of the body, with and make choice of

G

the

the most perfect, and most absolute vertues?
That family is nothing well gouerned,
where the handmayd is better treated, then
the mistresse of the house.

3. Who would deny, that it is a fowle
and shamefull thing for a Religious man, to
stay in the lowest degree of vertue, when he
seeth secular men neuer to make a stay in
their degree of state of life, which they haue
once imbraced; but euer to aspire to an hi-
gher, vntill they come to the highest?
Hence it is, that a vulgar person first see-
keth to raise himselfe to be a Gentleman,
then a Baron, next an Earle, a Marques, a
Duke, vntill in conclusion he lay hold on
the Scepter and Crowne: and when he is
come to this, he is not contented with an
ordinary Crowne, but he seeketh a more
rich, more potent, & a more noble Crown,
and consequently the greatest that can be
had in this life. And shall a Religious man
be of so dastardly a mind, as not to labour to
obtaine a most noble spirituall Crowne?
Should he stand in the first degree of per-
fection, when he may with his great com-
mendation, and no lesse profit mount vp to
the highest? Is not this a strang kind of sot-
tishnes, and folly? Is not this to make a light
esteeme of my will, and to refuse the help of
my

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my grace, by the benefit wherof he might compasse an higher degree of perfection?

4. Vnderstand my Sonne, that a Religious man is more deare vnto me, who endeavourerth for my greater glory, to arrive to the highest degree of perfection: and this ought not without cause to be inough vnto him, not to stay in his course, but still to hold on. Go to, tel me, what servant is so contemptible & vile, who is contented to be in little grace and fauour with his Lord, when he may be in very great? Why then, thou Religious man, who art for so many respects bound vnto me, as my servant, why I say, when by labouring to perfectiō thou mayst deserue my extraordinary fauour, thou delayest to do it? What paynes doth the poore servant take to gayne his maisters grace? and how much is he afflicted, whē he seeth, notwithstanding all the diligence he vseth, he cannot get into his maisters fauour? wherefore then dost thou make a stand in the very entrance to perfection, when thou mayst easily get into the innermost parts of it, & gayne thy Lord vnto thee? To please me, is not my gayne, but thine.

5. O of what worth is but one degree of glory in heauen, and how glorious is he in heauen, who hath deserued it! The Reli-

gious, who now triumph in heauen, do make so great an esteeme euen of the least increase of glory, which they had merited, whiles they laboured to perfection heer on earth, as they do not only yield their Creatour immortall thanks, but had rather also, if there were need, spend their bloud a thousand times, then not to haue obtained that glory. Wilt thou therefore, who mayst without spilling of thy blood, or losse of life, increase thy glory and crowne in heauen from day to day by profiting towards perfection, stand still in the dore, contented with a very small measure of perfection?

6. Take heed, my Sonne, least that befall vnto thee, which I told my disciple of: *That to him who hath, shall be giuen; and from him who hath not, shall also be taken away that he hath.* Neither is that wont to be done only for a punishment of ingratitude, but ordinarily also it hapneth to all things more or lesse affected with some quality. For example: Wood not much kindled, easily forgoeth the little heat that it hath, not so if it had been well kindled. So a Religious man, who hath gotten but little perfection, doth very easily loose it; but he, who hath got many degrees of it, doth not easily forsake it, but is like a tree, that hath taken deep roote, and
strongly

strongly resisteth both winds, and tempests.

7. There be also some, who affected to a more free life, do for purging of themselves say, that the study of perfection is only proper to Novices. But they be miserably deceived; for as much as all religious persons be bound to labour to perfection, and the more ancient a man is in religion, the more diligent should he be in furnishing himselfe with vertues, as he, who ought to have both a greater vnderstanding and knowledge of his owne obligation, and hath a longer triall and experience of the sweetnes of perfection. He that is not hungry, is soone filled: and it is an ill signe in a religious man, if he receiue no pleasure in the study of vertues.

8. Others contrariwise haue an ouerhasty desire to get vp to the highest degree of perfection, and if they happen peraduenture to fall into some defect, they be eftsoons discouraged, and loose their courage. But this is not my will, neither is it the way of labouring to perfection. For the greatest perfection is in the victory & overcoming of all vices, and in the purchasing of all vertues, & for the effecting of this, there must be some continuance of tyme. Wherefore to seeke euery day more perfection then other (which we speake of heere) is nothing els

but to ouercome the passions, or to restraine the perturbations of the mind, & the inordinate desires therof. And to be absolutely perfect, is nothing els, then after the victory ouer our selues to be dead to the world, and to liue to god alone.

9. He that hath enemies and aduersaries, can neuer be secure, vnles he cut them off cleane, and destroy them: but necessary it is not, that he take them a way at one time, & all togeather. So a Religious mans enemyes be the passions, which dayly rebell against him, and though he cannot ouercome the all at once at one & the same time; yet let him labour to extirpate one after another, and so doing, he shall hold on to greater perfection. In like manner an whole Kingdome is not set vpon all at once, but now one castle is taken from the enemy, and then another, or some Citty brought in subiection, and so one after another, vntill he become possessed of the whole Kingdome: Euen so doth a religious man, who hath a desire to inuade & set vpon the kingdome of perfection, whiles he must now gaine one vertue, and then another: & this is euery day to labour to greater perfection. And therefore he must not in any sort be discouraged, though he become not very perfect

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perfect by one or two actions, He goeth
well onward in his journey, who stayeth
no where vpon his way.

*That a Religious man must conserue and
keep the perfection he hath gotten:
and of the manner of keeping it.*

CHAP. XVII.

Sonne, little profiteth the good health
of body to be recouered, if it be after
hurt againe by any intemperance of eating,
or other carelesnes, since the relapse into
sicknes is more dangerous, then the sicknes
itselfe. The same is the consideration of
spirituall Perfection, which once being
had, profiteth little, if we forgo it againe,
through default of our owne vigilancy and
wary keeping of the same. And if the re-
lapse into corporall sicknes be a matter of
so great consideration for the daunger tow-
ards the body; much more is to be feared a
relapse into the old imperfections, that in-
danger the spirituall life.

2. Sonne, desirest thou to be freed from
the daunger of dying spirituallly? Then
shunne those things, that be dispositions to
that death. For we learne by dayly experi-
ence, that they, who once languish in the

study of perfection, do fall into a thousand defects, and into so great leuity and inconsistency of manners, liberty of conuersation, and imprudency of mind, as not only all shame laid aside, they do nothing worthy of prayse, but do furthermore glory, & reioyce in their owne errors and defects. And in this they be not vnlike to those Angells, who fell from heauen, and together with their most greiuous ruine, lost also all their spirituall gifts, and procured to themselues most extreme euills. For looke how much more excellent they were in dignity then all creatures, so much more by their fall from heauen they became worse, and more contemptible then them all. My Apostle also, who betrayed me, from his dignity of Apostleship fell into the downfall of desperation. The same hapneth to the Religious men; who from the higher degree of perfection they fall, be the more sorely bruized and crushed by their fall, and become worse. And as he is called happy, who declineth from euill, and imbraceth good: so contrariwise miserable and vnhappy is that man, who forsaking the way of perfection, traceth & holdeth on the way of licentiousnes and liberty.

3. But to conserue the degree of perfection

tion thou hast gotten, there be two vertues that may help thee, and those be *Loue*, and *Humility*. *Loue* will make thee vigilant to auoid the daungers growing from theues, and robbers. *Humility* will conceale and hide thee, that thou come not within their view or sight. And how profitable & auailable *Loue* is for this purpose, it is no hard matter to demonstrate. A rich and wealthy man, who is not in loue with his riches, soone looseth them. For he that loueth not any thing, esteemeth it not: and he that esteemeth it not, hath no care of keeping it: and euery one knoweth, that a thing negligently kept, is easily lost. Euen so as necessary it is for a Religious man to be greatly affected to the perfection he hath once got: for of loue there is caused a feare of loosing it: of feare a sollicitude & diligence in keeping it: & sollicitude againe cauleth him to find, and search out meanes and wayes, necessary & profitable for attayning to the end.

4. Whosoeuer hath a care to keep his corporall health, asketh aduise of expert & learned Phisitians, eateth good and wholesome meats, keepeth his settimes of eating, neglecteth not requisite exercises of body, chooseth an habitation in a healthfull place, and ayre approued of the Phisitians,

keepeth himselfe out of the rayne, winds ;
and from other outward incommodities ;
and in few words , is very carefull not to
exceed in any thing , that may peradventure
any way hurt him . The same causeth solli-
citude in a Religious man , if he haue a desire
to conserue Perfection , and seeke his soules
health . For first his care is not to order his
owne life according to his owne will , or by
the counsaile of more loose and free compa-
nions , but rather by the direction of Supe-
riours , and spirituall Fathers . Secondly , to
eate of good meats , namely those that I vsed
my selfe , when I liued on earth , that is , to
do the will of my Father , who is in heauen ,
whose will is our soules sanctification . And
therefore whatsoeuer God giueth vs for the
sanctifying of the soule , is the best meat , as
contrariwise whatsoeuer maketh to the de-
filing therof , such as be sinnes , is the worst
poyson of all . Thirdly , he neglecteth not
the vse and exercise of vertues . For sith per-
fection is founded in Charity , which is like
vnto fire , whereunto if wood be cast , it in-
creaseth , if it be remoued and taken away ,
it goeth out : Even so , the more , Religious
men , who haue their part in Charity , do
exercise themselves in vertue , the more they
profit in perfection : and the lesse they be
exercised

exercised in them, the lesse they get of perfection: And therefore all exercise of vertue ceasing, perfection cealeth also.

5. And as touching an healthful place, where the soule is to dwell, I know none comparable to Religion, where I haue placed the religious man: but if we consider particular places, the best is that, that his spirituall Phisicians or Fathers assigne him. And if he would fly all occasions of falling into any imperfections, he shal so very well arme and defend himselfe against all outward difficulties. Finally he committeth no excesse, because in all doubtfull matters, he repaireth to his spirituall Father, & seasoneth all pennances and mortifications with the salt of moderation and discretion.

6. The other way that conserueth perfection, is by humility. He that is become possessed of a rich and pretious jewell, is very wary three ways, that he loose it not at any tyme. First he layeth it vp in a secret place, that it may not easily be seene, discovered, or found of others. Secondly, he letteth not euery owne see it, neither doth he openly brag, that he hath such a Jewell. Thirdly, he taketh it not from the thing, whereat it hangeth. For example, the heat of water dependeth of the fire, and if you
remoue

remoue it from the fire, it looseth the heate. Humility in a Religious man, whose precious stone is the study of perfection, remedyeth all these three daungers. First it causeth him to conceale, and hide his vertues, and perfections from the sight or knowledg of others. Secondly, not only not to vaunt and brag of his spirituall riches, but also to thinke himselfe vnworthy of them, and withall to acknowledge and confesse himselfe poore, a beggar, and an vnprofitable seruant. Thirdly, to acknowledge, that the Jewel of perfection dependeth of my grace, knowing that it is lost, if it be separated from it. For as I resist the proud, so giue I grace to the humble. And therefore if thou hast a desire to haue thy perfection not only conserued, but to increase also, attend thou diligently to the exercise of true humility.

The end of the first Booke.



THE SECOND BOOKE of Religious Perfection.

Wherein is treated of the three Vowes
of Religion, and the perfect obserua-
tion thereof . And first of the
three Vowes in generall .

*Of the dignity, and excellency of the three
Vowes, that be made by Religious persons.*

CHAP. I.

SON, when any thing, though
otherwise of great worth is
not knowne, it is not much
esteemed, because the excellen-
cy & worth thereof is obscured
by the darknes of ignorance, and therby the
due estimation is taken away . And this is
the cause, wherefore the three Vowes, that
be

be made in Religion, be not so esteemed of some, euen Religious men themselves, because they vnderstand not the worth, excellency, & profit thereof. He cannot be free frō fault, who vnderstandeth not what in regard of his state he both may, and ought to know. Wherefore know thou (my Son) that the excellency of these vows is greater then many conceiue, neither are they of litle consequence. And vnder the name of *Vow*, is vnderstood an obligation of a Religious man made to God his Creatour, of performing and doing some better good. And sith this obligation is very noble, spirituall, and diuine, euery religious man ought not without cause, diligently to ponder, reuerently to esteeme, and exactly to obserue the same.

2. That it is most noble, it cleerly appeareth by this; for that the will bindeth it selfe, which amongst the faculties of the soule holdeth the principality, & first place, and hath a commaund ouer all the rest of the powers. Againe, it is most noble, because it is made to God, whose maiesty is infinite, & who is the authour of all true excellency. Moreouer because it is made for a most noble end, namely the glory of Gods Name, which is the more amplified, the more exactly that obligation is kept. There is added
further,

further, that the vertue of Religion among all morall vertues excelleth for noblenes & dignity. Seeing therefore a Vow is an action of that most noble vertue that giueth light to all other vertues, it manifestly followeth, that a Vow is a most noble vertue. For what the tree is, the same be the fruits thereof.

3. And that this obligation is spiritual and holy, is out of controuersy; both because it is directed to a spirituall good, namely to holines of life, and because it is the very entrance and beginning of the spirituall life of Religious men. Whereupon as the life of the body dependeth on the hart as the beginning: so the religious life, and to be a religious man hath the dependance of this holy obligation. And as by the least hurt of the hart, the life of body receiueth great hurt also, and the hart being taken away, the life is taken away together: euen so by the very least default in the obseruatiō of this obligation, the Religious life is much preiudiced, and that againe ceasing, or taken away, a man ceaseth to be Religious. The nearer the euill cometh to the hart, the more dangerous it is.

4. That this obligation is diuine, is also certaine, because it is of the holy Ghost, who by his diuine inspiration moueth a
mans

mans mind to the making of such an obligation. Secondly, because the person, to whome it is made, is diuine, that is, God himselfe. Now let a Religious man consider and see, how much he ought to loue it, with what regard to keep it, and with what deuotion, and care to obserue it in all things that he is able, because it is made to him, who penetrateth and entreteth into the most inward secret of the hart, and well knoweth, who hath iust cause to obserue it, and who not.

5. But now I would desire to know of those to whome it causeth some trouble and difficulty, that they be tyed in so noble and holy a band, what the cause is, that secular men haue them in so great regard, and veneration? They will say perhaps, because they be religious and my seruants. And what made them religious and my seruants, but these three Vowes? Many secular persons liue at this day in the world, far more learned, more holy, and more perfect then many Religious, and yet be they nothing so much honored, as religious men be; and the cause is, because they be not tyed to me by these holy bands of Vowes. Secular men, when they behold Religious persons, doe consider them, as wholly mine, by three
Vowes

Vowes conlecrated to me, & what honour they do them, they thinke they giue to me. But this they do not to men of the world, though otherwife eminent for their vertue; and therfore to be tyed in these bands, is no contemptible matter, but most honorable, and most noble, euen to the world, sith the Religious be in so great veneration with the great men of the world.

6. These three Vowes againe be of very great regard, for that they cause the Religious to triumph victoriously, and to go away with victory over their three deadly enemies. For whils they exercise *Pouerty* against the vanity of the world, *Chastity* against the tentation of the flesh, and *Obedience* against the frauds of the crafty diuell, they go easily away with victory. But those Religious, who vse not these kind of armes, are oftentimes shamefully ouercome. Let not him be a souldiar, who will not take a weapon in hand, neither let him go to the battaile, who refuseth to fight.

7. And now tell me, my Sonne, what those Religious men deserue, who make but light esteeme of so holy, and godly an obligation, and what they also deserue, who keep it nor, when they may, & ought to keep it? What punishment attendeth them, who

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do

do not only breake it, but further contemne it also? O how strait an accompt are they to make, not only of their owne transgressions, but also of those of others, that is, of those, who by their bad example were induced to violate and breake their Vowes they had before made vnto me. For promise by Vowe is not made to men, but to the diuine maiesty: it is not made vnwillingly, but voluntarily. Neither is the obligation therof concerning any light or temporall matter, but touching a great and spirituall matter, that is, the saluation of the Soule. He that lightly regardeth what he hath once promised to God, shall againe be as little regarded of God.

*Of the utility and profit that Vowes bring,
and cause to Religious persons.*

CHAP. II.

LORD, our Nature is so sore depressed & surcharged with the weight of our owne miseries, as I know not, whether it were good and profitable for a man to bind himselfe by Vowes, sith to me it seemeth nothing els, but to adde one burden to another, and consequently much to be feared, least in conclusion, seeing it is very weake,
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it fall vnder the burden. And more then this there be so many obligations, and bands of precepts imposed partly by thee, partly by thy Church layd vpon vs, as it is almost impossible for vs to satisfy them; therefore it seemeth not good to surcharge our selues with new bands of Vowes. Neither doth there appeare so great vtility likely to redound vnto vs by the benefit of Vowes, but that there is presented a greater daunger by transgressing, and breaking them. I add further, Lord, that fre and voluntary offices of deuotion are more accepted off by thee, then be the forced. But whosoever shall make a Vow, is forced to stand to his promise, and therefore I see not, how great a vtility there is of Vowes.

2. Thou art deceiued, my Sonne. For Vowes be burdens that load not, but rather ease, & help nature it selfe to the exercising of all more noble works. The feathers and wings of byrdes carry a shew of a burden, and yet they help to raise them aloft, and without which they cannot fly. Besids, experience teacheth, that they be religious, who do most promptly & most exactly obserue the commaundments of God: whence it appeareth, that by the benefit of Vowes they are holpen to obserue the precepts of

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God,

God, and of the Church, after a more exact, and perfect manner.

3. Thou art wide, if thou thinkest that any profit returneth to me by thy Vowes. It is not so. There is no sowing, nor mowing for me heere. Promises made to men, redound to the profit of them to whome they be made, but the merit of the Vowes that are made to me, remaineth to the vility of him who voweth: yea the honour & glory that of Vowes arise to me and my seruice, appertaineth also to the good of them that vow. For I do abundantly reward them, as I do seuerely chastise the bad workes, that be dishonorable to piety, and to the seruice of God.

4. And where thou sayst, that by Vowes all liberty is taken away, in so much as the Religious do all things of necessity, & therefore haue no merit of their works at all, thou art deceiued. For there be two necessities; one naturall, and this taketh away all liberty, merit, & commendation of all good works, such as is the falling of a stone downwards. The other is voluntary, or proceeding of the will, or of a promise voluntarily made, and this doth not only not take away the merit of the good worke, but also much increaseth it; for that both the worke, and
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the promise be voluntary and free . And this is the necessity so highly commended of the blessed in heauen, because it did driue them to the exercising of the more noble , and more excellent workes . Happy is that necessity , which compelleth to what is better .

5. Moreouer thou must know, my Son, that the grief, & difficulty, which weother-whiles find and feele in executing our promise of Vowes, doth not take away nor diminish in the Religious their merit, but rather increase it : for in fullfilling our Vows, there is not only done a good worke, but that heauines, repugnance, and difficulty is further ouercome, which indeed is a matter of no little consequence . Howbeit to fullfill a good worke promised by Vow, though there occurre no difficulty in doing it, is more meritorious, then to fullfill it without any precedent Vow . For as I will declare after, the Vow it selfe is meritorious, which merit he hath not who doth a good worke, which he before promised to do without making a Vow .

6. There be other vtilities, which vowes do bring to the Religious. For first vndoubted it is, that the tree, the deeper roote it shall take within the earth, brin-

geth forth the better fruite: Euen so mans will, the more stable it shal be, in good, produceth the more noble works. And among the effects of Vowes one is, that it maketh the will more firme in good works. Who knoweth not, how various, and mutable mans will is: now it is willing, & within a while it is vnwilling, and what pleaseth to day, displeaseth to morrow. And doubtles it would be better, if the will were constant and stable in imbracing good, and that it may be stable and immutable, is effected by the benefit of Vowes. For so soone as a man shall haue made a Vow, he must performe it, neither may he reuoke it without sinne: & that he may not go backe, is both profitable and good, and deriued from the very nature of a Vow. And of this it followeth, that a good worke proceeding from a will grounded in good, is better then other good workes, and deserueth a more ample reward. As contrariwise a bad and hurtfull worke, comming from a peruerse and obdurate will, is more detestable then other ill works, and meriteth a more sore punishment. Would you haue a Lunatike person to do no hurt? Then bind him fast vpon the first occasion.

7. Another vtility nothing inferiour

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to the former, is this. Euery man will confesse, that it most profiteth a man, if he be most inwardly vnited to God Almighty. And this is effected by Vowes: for whiles a man by Vowes bindeth himselfe to me, I am in like māner tyed againefast vnto him; and therfore if the Religious do by these sacred bands bind themselues fast vnto me, & so become mine, how is it possible, that I should not deliuer my selfe vnto them also? That I should not help them, not defend them, not conserue, & keep them, as a thing most deare vnto me? I should not be what I am, if my creature should go beyond me in liberality. Wherefore it is very agreeable to reason, that seeing they haue most firmly conioyned themselues to me the fountaine of Grace, I should also communicate vnto them the flowing streames of my grace, and my heauenly gifts, and take so great care of them, as neither the Diuell, nor any other creature may do them harme. The Religious liue so much the more secure, the more potent, and powerfull is their Lord, and Maister to whome they haue conioyned themselues.

8. There is yet another vtility, that all good workes done by Vow, do merit more with God, then those that are not done by

Vow . He that keepeth chastity for loue of me, doth well, and meriteth : but he that for loue of me maketh a Vow of chastity & keepeth it, doth better and meriteth more. For the former exerciseth but one vertue, that is, Continency: but the later exerciseth two, namely Continency and Religion, the noblest of all morall vertues . Moreouer to promise a good worke, is a good thing: and to performe a promise is also good, and therefore for them both a man is held worthy of commendations and thanks . Let him then be more deare vnto thee, who bestoweth more spirituall good vpon thee.

9. Scing so many benefits redound vnto vs by Vowes, as the stability of the will, the coniunction with God, and the merit of workes, I would be now glad to vnderstand why some, when they should most of all reioyce, be sory that they hauetyed themselues by Vowes? What cause of grief should they haue? For if these sacred bands should deprivethem of some great commodity, they might haue iust cause of sorrowing. But indeed they loose none by it. For as a vine fastned to a tree, or to a post, and therefore lesse obnoxious and exposed to the iniury of the winds, bringeth forth better and more abundant fruite, then if it were loose
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and vntyed: Euen so be Religious persons, by the benefit of these Vowes, are more strong, and stable, and more free from tentations, and do yeld greater increase of good works, & therefore why should they afflict themselves with grief?

10. Euill must needs please him, who is sorry for good, or complaineth therof. When good meate is hurtfull to a man, it is a signe that his stomake is infected and surcharged with bad humours, and therefore it is to be purged with some antitode, if he meane to preuent the hazard of his life. In like manner if the making of Vowes, which is good and holy, be to some Religious person troublesome, it is a signe, that his mind is infected with some bad disposition, which must be taken away and remoued by the spirituall Phisitian, that the hazard of his spirituall death may be auoyded.

*How acceptable and pleasing to God the
three Vowes of Religious persons be.*

CHAP. III.

Sonne, how should not the Vowes of the Religious be accepted by me, when as they be made for my honour and glory? How is it, that they should not be deare to

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me, when as they be the meanes of attaining perfection, which I do so earnestly desire at their hands? O how much should some earthly Lord glory, if his seruants should make him any such promise, he would no doubt exult for ioy, though he should not be assured, whether they had done it in earnest, & from their hart, for the loue of him their Lord, or in regard of their owne commodity. And should not I, who am assured, that the Religious do from their hart make these Vowes, and only for loue of me bind themselues to the performing of good and holy workes, reioyce, and be glad? Should not I make a demonstration, how much they please me?

2. For there be three things, that do in particular please me in Vowes. First the deuotion, wherewith the Vowes be made. Secondly the diligence, wherewith they are obserued. Thirdly the ioy, that the Religious conceiue by occasion of the making of their Vowes. Deuotion groweth of the consideration of the excellency of the oblation, that is made in the Vowes. For the Religious man by a benefit of his three Vowes offereth himselfe wholly in sacrifice, without reseruatiō of any part to himselfe. And if the sacrifices of the old law, which
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were of bulles and calues, were so pleasing vnto me; how much shall these content me, which Religious men do voluntarily offer vnto me? And if I made so high esteeme of Abrahams only will, when he was ready to sacrifice his only Sonne vnto me, what a reckoning should I make of the sacrifice, that a Religious man maketh of himselfe, by offering me his will, soule, body and all? Againe, Diligence ariseth of the loue they carry towards me. He that loueth, cannot expect, or of slouth put off till another time, or prolonge that which he knoweth to be very pleasing to the beloued. And in Religious life nothing pleaseth me more, then the obseruation of Vowes. Finally ioy for the Vowes made, groweth of this, that the Religious man considereth, how pleasing this his oblation was vnto me. O how sorely should a Religious man offend me, if he should be troubled, and grieued for a thing very well done, and most acceptable to me. It is no lesse a sinne to be sorry for a good work, then to be glad of a bad one.

3. There be also other things, that make this Religious oblation most pleasing to me, and cause me to make an high estimation therof, and that is, because it hath the beginning of sincere loue towards me.

For

For first the Religious do by these three Vowes, as with three nayles, voluntarily nayle themselves to the Crosse for loue of me, not for three dayes alone, but for al their life. They do not only crucify their body with the nayle of Pouerty, and the senses with the naile of Chastity, but their vnderstanding also, and their owne iudgment with the naile of Obedience, by obeying their Superiours will rather, then their owne. The theefe that confessed me on the Crosse whereon he did hang a very short time, where he spake vnto his companion but one word in fauour of me, tasted so abundantly of my best loue towards him, as I made him that very day an inheritour of paradise. And why should I not loue a Religious man hartily, who in regard of his Vowes made for loue of me, is bound to continue vpon the Crosse all his life long? Why should not his oblation be most pleasing to me, who for the amplificatiō of my glory exposeth himselfe to all dangers, that he may preach my Ghospell, not by word alone, but, which is more, by example of life also?

4. Another cause, why I hold the oblation of a Religious person amongst the things that be most deare vnto me, is, because

cause by these three Vows he doth wittingly and willingly giue me whatsoeuer he can giue. For whereas he doth by Vow yeald himselfe wholly to my seruice, he giueth me not only the workes, but also the worker of them. Certes, a secular man neuer giueth me so much: for by doing well, he giueth me nothing but the fruite, and not the tree, whiles a Religious person giueth me the one and the other. This further pleaseth me that the Religious in making their Vowes, make protestation, that they will not loue any other besides me, nor serue any but me, and this not for a certaine time, but for all eternity. Moreouer the Religious consecrate vnto me all their owne right & power of doing any thing contrary to their Vow once made, and this pleaseth me very much. A secular person, for example, who doth without making any Vow for loue of me renounce all his riches, doth indeed well, yet he reserueth to himselfe an interest and right of gathering riches together againe when he shall please: But a Religious man by making the Vow of Pouerty, depriueth himself not only of riches, but also of power of heaping or gathering of riches for the time to come, and of all propriety thereunto forouer.

5. The third thing that in the obligation of Vowes pleaseth me, is, that the Religious do by it not only giue all, but do it after the best and most perfect manner, that is, that I should haue such a comaund, power, and right ouer them, as I may vse their seruice in whatsoeuer thing, where, when, and as much as shall please me. And hence it is, that the Religious ought not to vse himselfe, as a thing of his owne, but as mine, and consecrated to me. Neither must he vse his owne iudgment, where & when he listeth, but at my pleasure, because I am his Lord, and not himselfe. Wherefore know thou my Religious child, that he shal commit a grieuous sacriledge, who would either take from me that which had beene formerly consecrated & deliuered vnto me by Vowes, or vsurpe and vse it at his owne pleasure. The lesse thou hast, and the lesse thou dost after thine owne will, the lesse will thy error be, and the lesse accompt thou shalt yield to God.

6. The fourth and last cause is, why I most of all approue and allow of the Vows of Religious persons, is, for whereas the world which is a deceyuer of soules, is hatefull to me, I am very glad, if the iuglings, frauds, and vanities of it be discouered and
laid

laid open . And ſeing the Vowes of the Religious be cleane oppoſite to the world (for by vertue of them all the riches, pleaſures, honors, & other the worlds vanities be condemned) they canot but be moſt acceptable. But conſider, my Child, that this contempt of the world is not to be manifeſted by an externall ſhew, or by words alone, but by facts and workes, and therefore it is not enough to haue made Vowes, but thou muſt further of neceſſity obſerue, and keep them. It is good to proclayme a defiance to thine enemy, but better it is to overcome him. While, a Religious perſon performeth his Vowes, he declareth himſelfe an enemy to the world, but when he diſchargeth his promiſe made by Vow, he ouercommeth and vanquiſheth it quite.

*How conuenient it is, that Religious men
bind themſelues to God by three Vowes .*

CHAP. IIII.

Sonne, it is very agreable, that the Religious be furniſhed and provided of the armes of three Vertues, which he hath promiſed by Vowes, to wit, Pouerty, Chaſtity and Obedience . When the ſouldier deſireth to imitate his Captaine, and to arme himſelfe

selfe with those weapons which he doth, that he may manfully, according to his Captaynes pleasure, fight with his enemy, he is worthy both of praise and reward. I am the Captaine and Generall of all the religious warfare who haue marched in the vanguard with these three Verrues, and haue shewed all my followers, how they should fight with these armes I ouercame myne enemies, & triumphed ouer them; & therefore meet it is, that the Religious, who serue vnder my colours, and be to fight with the same enemyes, should vse and handle the same weapons, which if they do as they ought, they cannot but go out of the field victorious. The souldier, who endeauoureth to imitate his General, though he arriue not to his great strength and courage, is neuertheles worthy of his reward.

2. It is further requisite, that the Religious man cast of all things, that may be of power to hinder his profit of spirit. A scholler is to do three things, that may make to his profit in humane literature. First, he must remoue all the obstacles and impediments of his studyes, such as be the pleasures of the flesh. Secondly such things, as may hinder his true progresse in his studyes, and those be the cares of temporall goods, and helps.

helps. Thirdly, he must make choice of the most effectuall and best meanes for the taking of his maisters lessons, and that is, diligently to obey his maister, and the law of the Schoole. These three obstacles the Religious also remoue and take away by the benefit, and help of their Vowes. For by the Vow of Chastity they cut off all carnal delights: by that of Pouerty, the sollicitude of temporall things: and by that of Obedience they fulfill the laws of their institute and their Superiours precepts. To remoue the impediments of this spirituall way, is to walke on, and profit in spirit.

3. Sonne, sith thou art absolutely resolved to renounce the world, and all the vanities thereof, meet it is, thou giue it ouer, and forsake it in the perfectest manner that is possible. Some leaue it in affection, as do those that haue no desire of vanities at all, and they do well. Some forsake it indeed, as do they who imbrace a Religious state, and these do better. Some againe leaue it both wayes, and they renounce it after a most perfect manner, and this do my Religious, when they vow Pouerty, Chastity, and Obedience. The further thyne enemy is from thee, the lesse can he hurt thee.

4. The world vseth three sorts of nets,
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wherein many be caught . The first net is of gold and siluer , that is, ofterrene riches, which because it delighteth the eye, is loued of them who are within it, and is desired of them who are out of it . This net the Religious escape by Vow of Pouerty . For pouerty, the veyle of concupiscence being taken out of sight, causeth, that though the net be made of gold and siluer, it seeme nothing but a net, and a sore prison to be in.

5. Another net is knit of the birdlime of pleasures of the flesh, wherein those that be caught, the more they stirre, the more be they intangled and woone in it . From out of this net the Religious be deliuered by the Vow of Chastity, by the pure and milke white wings whereof they be raised aloft; and freed from the cleauing glew of carnall contentments, they become like vnto Angels.

6. The third net is rather an imaginary and phantasticke one, then a solide & true net, wherein they be caught who presume of themselves, and seeke after the vayne honours and estimation of this world. The Religious auoyd this net by the Vow of Obedience, who as they subiect themselves vnto others, so thinke they not of imbracing any other thing, then humility and contempt

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contempt of themselves. To live in the world, and to have been caught in one of these nets, is no great matter; but to live in Religion, and to have fallen into the worlds snares and nets, is a case to be exceedingly lamented.

7. There is yet another cause of congruity, that the Religious make the aforesaid three Vowes, because I have chosen, and called them out of the world for the doing of some noble, great, and generous actions, & therefore they need a great, and stout courage, which they must declare and manifest by their worthy deeds: and the height & excellency of the Religious state, wherein I have placed them, exacteth no lesse. For a man to be affected to these transitory and passing goods, argueth an abject and base mind: in like manner to take a contentment in the pleasures of the flesh, is rather of beasts then of men. Therefore agreeable it is, that Religious be most far from both, and this they effect by their Vowes, whiles they give demonstration of their generous mind, and by exercise of vertue auoyding that whereunto both nature & al the senses do incline.

8. But Lord, I see not, what generosity is manifested by the Vow of Obedience, by which the Religious do wholly subiect
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themselves vnto others. Neither do I well conceive, how contemptible a matter it is to be affected to riches, and pleasures of this life, and is not a base thing also to obey, and serue another in the very least, and most abiect things.

9. Soone, thou easily discoverest thy self neither to vnderstand, nor indifferently to examine matters. For if thou thinke, that the Religious by the Vow of Obedience be subiect to others then to me, thou art greatly deceiued. And if thou thinke, that to serue in base things for loue of me, or to be subiect to others by ordination from me, is an abiect thing, thou art much more deceiued. There is a far different manner of liuing in my Court, from that of the World, where the dignity is taken of the office that is exercised, and not of the end or scope that is ayemed at, and therfore all seeke rather to haue a power and commaund ouer others, then to be commaunded, and in subiection; and all aspire to dignities and honours. And because these be of greatest regard with me, therfore they also who be possessed of these honours, are in greatest estimation, and be held for great men.

10. But the case is far different. For if the end for which any thing is done, be vile and

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and abieſt, the actious muſt needs alſo be abieſt, and of the ſame nature. And where the louers of the world do all for an abieſt end, as for the gaine of money, the eſtimation and opinion of a good name, vaine glory, reuenge, and the like, it conſequently followeth, that all their trauiayles & actions muſt alſo be held moſt baſe. But in my court the eye and intention is eſpecially bent to the end, which am I, and from me all humane actions receiue and borrow their worth, and dignity. And where I reward all the actions, that my Religious friends, and children do for loue of me with eueralſting glory, none of them ought to be reputed either little or abieſt, but great and noble. And he who for loue of me ſubieſteth himſelfe to another, giueth an euident ſigne of a generous and great mind, becauſe he omitteth nothing, that may be pleaſing to me his Lord.

II. Wherefore thou muſt not my child, accompt that baſe and vile, which is done for loue of me, and for my glory, becauſe a conſideratiō is to be had not ſo much of the thing, as of the affection, & end for which it is done. It is not vile and abieſt, that maketh an entrance into heauen, and is recompens'd with an heauenly reward: but

that is truly vile, which creepeth vpon the earth, cleaueth fast vnto it, and receiueth what is terrene & earthly, for a compensation and reward.

*How Religious Perfection consisteth
in the three Vowes.*

CHAP. V.

LORD, if Religious Perfection consist in perfect charity, and the coniunction with the supreme Good, which thou art; what need we to busy our selues in other vertues, and leaue that which is our end. Thou knowest Lord, that charity is the **Queen** and Lady of all vertues, and of it dependeth all the law of grace, and therefore if we conuert all our cares, studies, and cogitatioⁿs to the purchasing thereof, we should not labour much about the procuring of other vertues: for if we haue but that one vertue, we can want nothing.

2. It is true my Child, that the end & scope of Religious perfection is perfect charity, & vnion with me thy Creatour, but how canst thou be able to attaine the end without the due meanes vnto it? How wilt thou be vnited with me, vnles thou remoue all the things that hinder thee? Wherefore vnderstand

derstand thou, that, to that most inward union with thy Creatour, that is, with me, in which perfect charity consisteth, thou must come by intervall affections of mind, conspiring with the spirit of Religion, wherunto thou art called by me. And three things there be, that may hinder the humane affection, that it be not conioyned with me.

3. The first is the desire of riches, and of other goods of Fortune, which when it shall once haue seized vpon a part of a mans harts, suffereth not the whole man to come vnto me. Whereupon that yong man to whom I said, that if he would be perfect, he should sell all that he had, and giue it to the poore, and then come and follow me, went his way sad, because he was ouermuch deuoted to his possessions, which he had, many and great. This affection is taken away by the Vow of pouerty, whereby the Religious renounceth all that he possesseth in the world, that he may with all his affection, and loue vnite himselfe with his Lord.

4. Another impediment and bar, is the loue of carnall and sensuall pleasures, that he cannot see to vnite himselfe with me, which consisteth in spirituall loue. Where-

upon in a parable of the Ghospell a certaine man being inuited to a wedding, answered, that he could not come, because he had married a wife: and this carnal loue is quite taken away by the Vow of Chastity.

5. The third thing that hindreth, and is lesse acknowledged, is the inordination of mans will, which as it is propense to commaund others, so doth it with much adoe subiect it self to the will of another. And this inordination is such, as it separateth a man from me, and therefore I said in the Ghospell: He that will come after me, let him deny himselfe, that is, his owne will, and renounce as it were himselfe. Neither is it any other thing to be vnited to me, then to forsake himselfe, & to yeald himselfe wholly to me; but he laboureth in vaine to vnite himselfe to me, who doth not first of all depart from himselfe. This third let is taken away by the Vow of Obedience, by benefit whereof the Religious by subiecting himselfe to others, suffereth himselfe to be gouerned by the will of others. Seeing then Religious perfection consisteth in perfect charity, and an inward coniunction with me, and these Vowes be the means of obtaining it, and ordained for remouing the impediments thereof, it is not without
cause

cause affirmed, that in these three Vowes Religious perfection consisteth.

6. Moreouer, sith these three Vowes be the very foundations of a Religious life, it is not without congruity also said, that the perfection therof hath it dependance of the, euen as the perfection of a materiall edifice dependeth of the foundations. And there be three things in the foundations necessary. The one is, that in laying them, there be a special care & consideratiō had: for the surer the foundations be, the more stable will be the building. A second thing is, that they be kept whole and sound, and be not remoued. For by the very least mouing of them, there follow great cracks and ruines in the walls. The third is, that the edifice retayneth not the name of a building, or of an house, if the foundatiō be wanting, but is called a poore cot, wherinto the ordure and filth is wont to be cast.

7. Seing then the three Vowes be the foundations of Religion, these three things also ought to be obserued in them. And first that a Religious mans principall care be of his Vowes, for that of them dependeth the life and essence of his vocation: and if the Vowes be sure and stable, all the frame of a Religious mans spirituall building will

stand sure and immouable also. Secondly, that the Vowes be conserued and kept vn-stayned: for the very least default in the Vowes, causeth a notable hurt in Religious discipline. Finally, as when the houses foundatiō being taken away, the house forgoeth and looseth it name: euen so the Vowes being away, the Religious is said no more to be Religious, but an Apostata, who being once fallen from his state, is easily stayned with the filth and dirt of this world. When the rootes of the tree, which are the foundations therof, be hurt, the tree doth easily either wither away, or is little worth.

8. Besides, certaine it is, that Religion is a state, and a place of rest for the mind, where a man freed from dangerous stormes and tempests of this world, repositeth as in a quiet and secure harbour, and leadeth a spirituall and peaceable life. And Religion most of all compasseth this by the help of the Vowes, which intertaine and defend the Religious tranquillity and quiet, by deliuering a Religious man from the sollicitude, care, and trouble of this world: and for this cause also it is said, that Religious perfection is cōprehended in the three Vowes.

9. Wherefore the Vow of Pouerty first
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is in cause, that a Religious man is exempt from the care of keeping, or increasing, or also of dispensing temporall goods. Next, the Vow of Chastity freeth him from the care of house, of wife, of children and family, which is otherwhiles so combersome and tedious, as it bringeth many to desperation. Finally, by the Vow of obedience there is taken from the Religious the anxiety, & care, where with most men are wont to be vexed, whiles they be not able to determine and resolute by themselves, whether they should do this, or that, whether it would more profit to lead this manner of life, or that. But the Religious, who hath by Vow of Obedience left himselfe in all things wholly to the directiō of Superiours, is most free from such kind of superfluous anxietyes, perplexityes, tentations, and doubts.

10. Sonne, thou must haue a speciall regard to thy tranquillity and peace of mind, for that of it dependeth thy soules weale. Where trouble and disquiet is, there can be neither spirit nor deuotion. And know thou, that as long as in Religion thou keepest thy Vowes, they will in like manner keep thee in peace and quiet.

11. To conclude, Religious perfection is attributed

attributed to the Vowes, because it perfecteth the holocaust, that the Religious offer of themselves to God. In the old law the holocaust was all consumed with fire for an odour of sweetnes, and the oblation of it was soone ended. But the holocaust of the Religious continueth for life, & the nearer it is to the end, sweeter is the scent thereof, and therefore is to me made a Vow of perpetuall Poverty, perpetuall Chastity, and Obedience for euer. In the holocaust of Poverty are offered me all the externall and temporall goods: in that of Chastity, the goods of the body: & in that of Obedience, the goods of the mind. For in that the will is offered to me, all the faculties and powers that be in subiectiō to it, be offered withal, and because nothing more remayneth behind to be offered, by the Vowes a whole, entire, and perfect holocaust is not without cause offered.

12. The state of Virgins is perfect in it selfe, and very acceptable to me, but the Religious state is much more perfect, and more pleasing to me, because the Virgins do for loue of me only deprive themselves of the pleasures of the flesh, but Religious further spoile themselves of their owne will, and giue me what soeuer they haue. He giueth

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neeth not little, who giueth all he bath;
neither shall he receaue little in heauen,
who shall for his remuneration and reward
receaue me my selfe.

13. Now I would haue all to be themselves iudges in this matter, of how great reckoning the Vowes of Religiousought to be, sith they be the foundations and groundworke of Religious life, the conseruers of the minds tranquillity and quier, so much desired and sought for of men, and the most effectuall meanes towards the attayning of perfection, & the offering of a perfect sacrifice to the Creatour. A souldier maketh a great reckoning of his horse and armes, by the benefit wherof he may be able to maintaine his temporall life, and triumph ouer his enemyes. And shall not a Religious man esteeme of his Vowes, by help wherof he conserueth his spirituall life, and goeth away with victory, not only ouer his enemyes, but ouer himselfe also?

14. O how great will the splendour of these three Vowes be in Heauen, when like vnto three most precious stones they shal be set in a crowne of glory? For if the same now couered, concealed, and hidden as it were, do neuertheles giue out so great a light on earth, as the very great and mighty ones
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of this world admire them; how great will the brightnes therof be in heauen, where all things shall be seen, and appeare? doubtles their ioy and peace of mind will be exceeding great, who shall transport these iewells with them into heauen: as contrariwise great will be their grief and confusion, who whiles they liue, had them not in the esteeme that they ought to haue had. If thou contemnest those precious stones, which haue a vertue to raise thee vp to greatest honour, what is it that thou makest any great reckoning of?

Of the perfect obseruation of Religious Vowes.

CHAP. VI.

SONNE, in the world a great regard is had by euery man of his own honour, and renowne of his family, and therefore there raigne so many hatreds, and enimities so many slaughters committed, families brought to extreme pouerty & ouerthrown, and which is worst of all, many soules run to vtter perdition. And all this euill and mischief ariseth of this, that they labour onely to fulfill the worlds foolish lawes, and yet to the performance thereof Christians be neither bound, nor tyed by any Vow, but
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be rather by my contrary lawes forbidden to do them, vnder paine of eternall damnation. And if the men of this world do with so great an hazard of their fortunes, life, soule, and all, so diligently obserue so pernicious Lawes: certes, a Religious man hath much more reason to be very studious diligent, and exact in obseruing the lawes of his vows, which be the statutes & laws of the Holy Ghost, that concerne the good of soules, and my glory. And in truth he who preferreth the decrees of the world, his enemy, before the lawes of God, his Creatour, fighteth against himselfe.

2. Sonne, it is true, that a man is by the world reputed vile & dastardly, who vseth not the law of reuenging an iniury: but if for loue of me he remit & forgiue an iniury, he is with me, & with all vertuous persons censured for magnanimous & wise, because he ouercometh himselfe, and regardeth more the lawes of God, then of the world. But he who in Religion transgresseth his Vowes, is contemned of the world, is held infamous to the Religious, is of all other men condemned for ingrate, for that by benefit of Vowes he was raised vp vnto so high an estate, namely of Religion, and by the the same enriched with so many gifts and
spirituall

spirituall graces. And who seeth not, that to violate his Vowes, is nothing els then not to stand to his promise, nor satisfie his band? Who perceiueth it not, that it is as much as to contemne his benefactour and setter vp? And therefore the saying of the Gospel ought not to seeme harsh vnto thee, which I pronounced against them, when I said, *That he is not apt for the kingdome of heauen, who after putting his hand to the plough, looketh back againe.*

3. The beginners are not crowned in heauen, but the persecuters in good euen till death. It is also said in my Scripture. *That an vnfaithfull promise doth greatly displease God: & not without cause.* For he that dischargeth not his word in keeping promises made by Vow, goeth on next to this, that he contemne Religion, & consequently the same is condemned also, if it keepeth in it such as discharge not their duty. For it is no little scandall vnto men of the world, if they see the Religious to be defectiue in euery principall point, in which consisteth the essence of Religion it selfe. And the least reproach doth not redound to me also: for sith I haue accepted their promises made by Vow, if they be not performed as is requisite, I am vnworthily iniured by them, whome I haue

haue so tenderly loued, and whome I so inwardly affected. Besides the greatest hurt of all lighteth vpon the transgressors themselves, because they cast themselves into manifest hazard of Apostasy, and into the enemies snares, neuer likely to get out againe. And what meruaile if sometimes in this life also I bend the bow of my indignation against them. He that can satisfy the debt that he oweth, and vseth couenage that he may not pay it, is worthy neither of remission or pardon, nor of commiseration. It is a lesser euill to vow, then to reuoke the vow a man hath once made.

4. The Diuell the capitall enemy of Religious perfection is not ignorant, how much good cometh to a Religious man by the exact obseruation of his Vowes. For nothing bringeth him sooner, and with more security to the height of perfection, then the mortification of carnall desires. And what is it els, in a perfect manner, to performe the Vowes, then for a man to mortify himselfe? The Vow of Pouerty mortifyeth the desire of heaping vp riches: The Vow of Chastity the temptation and contentments of the flesh; and the Vow of Obedience the facultyes of the mind, the will, and proper iudgment. And this is the cause, why the

Diuell laboureth so much to perswade the Religious to make no conscience, or scruple in transgression of their Vowes; not only that he may so diuert them from the seeking of perfection, but also for this, that when the foundations be once shaken and weakened, it is no hard matter for him to overthrow the whole house. And an euill signe it is, when the beginning of the euill is giuen and occasioned by the principall part.

5. O how deare be those Religious to me, who seeke out diuers meanes, and helps for the attayning of the perfect obseruation of their Vowes, both for the better strengthening of the foundation of their spirituall edifice, and for the making of more sharp warre vpon the Diuel, by manfully resisting him. Some there be, who do euery day to themselves renew the Vow they haue once made to me, and do humbly craue my grace for the perfect obseruing of them. And this much pleaseth me? for they easily declare & make knowne, how great an inward desire they haue to auoyd all defects, and to performe their Vowes exactly. By this double desire of perfect obseruation of the Vowes, and of crauing grace, the soule maketh as it were the first step to the obtaining of what it desireth. Often to renew the Vowes once made,

made, is nothing els, then often to driue in the nayles faster, wherewith the Religious be nayled vpon the Crosse with mé, in so much as if they begin peradventure to be loose, they may be made more fast. And by this help the Religious be made more strong, able, & more constant in obseruing their Vowes.

6. There be others also, whome I loue as well, as the former, who when any temptation ariseth against their Vowes, do not dispute with themselves, whether it were a great fault or a little to do that which the temptation suggesteth, whether it could be done without mortall sinne, or no; but so soone as they perceyue it to be contrary to their Vowes, they cstsloons reiect it: no otherwise then he, vpon whome when peradventure a sparke of fire falleth, examineth not, whether it would burne him litle or much, but he instantly shaketh it off, and putteth it out with his hand, or foot. He that contemneth a little imperfectiō, which he might easily auoid, doth in time dissemble great ones. Giue eare my Sonne. Didst not thou make thy Vowes for loue of me, and that therby thou mightst do me seruice? Doest not thou keep the same, that thou mayest gayne the greater fauour at my

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hand? Sith then thou art assured, that the very least defects, committed against thy Vowes, do displease me, wherefore dost thou not forbear to commit them? If in things appertayning to the body, thou do not tustler any fault, neither great nor smal, why permittest thou any defect in obseruation of thy Vowes, then which nothing in Religion is more excellent? To do any thing that displeaseth me, though it be very little, is not of a zealous loue, such as I desire euery Religious man should be.

7. There is yet another meanes, by help wherof the Religious man may come to an exact obseruation of his Vowes: and this commonly doth he vse who is feruent in spirit, imitating the vse and manner of such as be very hungry. For they most carefully seeke what to eate, and they do without any difference eate whatsoeuer they find, whether hoate or cold, well or ill prepared, roasted or sodden. Euen so the feruent Religious be lead with a great desire to exercise those vertues which they haue promised by Vowes, and this both in great matters and in little, as well in hard and painefull, as in easie and pleasant. And for one to exercise himselfe often in his Vowes, & in the often actions of Pouerty, Chastity, and

and Obedience, maketh the obseruation of the Vowes very easy. For the frequentatiō of such acts prepareth a Religious man to the getting of an habit. And habit of it owne nature maketh a man agile, prompt, and ready to the exercising of Vertue, and consequently to the obseruing of his Vowes perfectly. We haue a plaine example in the skill of musicke, for the more a man frequenteth the exercise therof, the more readily, and the more cunningly is he accustomed to sing, or play.

8. By this it may be vnderstood, how greatly and daungerously they be deceiued, who care not for light transgressions in the obseruation of their Vows, not considering or marking, that the essence of a Religious man is in his Vowes, that they make or marre, to the good or hurt of their soules, that of the same depends al the good or euill of religion, scandall or edification, and my glory also, because the promises be made to me; and finally the merit it selfe of the three principall vertues, that be comprehended in the Vowes. Wherefore if there be not need of great care, and vigilancy that we fayle not in our duty, I know not in what there will be need. And if a man will not shew a seruour and zeale in this thing, I see not

wherein he should declare and manifest the same.

*Of the three Vowes in particuler . and first
of the Vow of Pouerty, how agreeable
and requisite it is , that the Re-
ligious be louers thereof.*

CHAP. VII.

S O N N E, meete it is not, that the seruant should refuse what his Lord & Maister hath imbraced, neither beseemeth it the scholler to learne another lesson, then that which his maister hath appointed him. Whiles I liued on earth, I chose, and willingly imbraced Pouerty. The same I taught and proposed to all that followed me, and now againe I earnestly recommend it to all, who aspire to the perfection of spirituall life. For I was borne so poore, as there was not a corner found in any house, that would intertaine and receiue me, when I was to come into the world. And therefore my poore Mother was forced to retire her selfe into a stable, wherein I was both borne, & layd in a maunger. I was borne of a poore Mother, brought vp as poorly, conuersed amongst the poore, and liued poore till my dying day; and at my death I was much
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more poore, because I had not whereupon to rest my pierced head, and gaue vp my life at last vpon the hard bed of the Crosse.

2. Let the Religious now consider, whether it be not agreeable, that they should be well affected to Pouerty by the voluntarily promised, and so highly esteemed and beloued by me. Let them ponder, whether it be meet, that members so richly adorned and set forth, lye hid vnder so needy an head. The seruant deserueth not to stay in the house, who is not contented to vse the same meate, drinke, and cloathing that his Lord vseth. Neither was I a louer of Pouerty alone, my Apostles imbraced the same, who besides that they were poore fishermē, when I called them out of the world, did further leaue that little which they had and possessed for loue of me, most affectuously imbracing Pouerty, as a true and faithfull companion. O how much did it please me, when being called by me, they did without further lingring, or delay forsake parents, ship, nets, & whatsoeuer they had, or might haue in this life. And though this action of Pouerty were great & heroicall in them, because they forlooke all; yet I stayed not heere, but would further haue the exercised in the same Pouerty, by liuing with with

me of the almes of other men, and therefore I sent them to preach abroad from one place to another, without purse or scrip, provided of nothing which was necessary, that they might repose all their hope in Gods providence.

3. The Religious man the lesse he hath, and the lesse desire he hath of temporall things, is the more apt for the helping of soules. And when I did after send them forth to preach the Ghospell all the world over, did they go loaden with baggage, or attended vpon by great traynes of seruants, or did they aduertise the citties, whither they went, of their comming, that they might find all manner of things provided and made ready for them? No such matter. But they went full of the holy Ghost, loaden with the weight of my doctrine, and incensed with a burning desire of conuerting countreyes to the fayth: they did like poore men enter into the Citties and Townes, where whiles they made their stay, by preaching me poore, and naked, dead vpon the Crosse, they caused exceeding motions in their hearers minds. Whome when they saw, neither to seeke, nor to accept of gold or siluer, meruailed much. And when they further saw them to take so long iournyes al
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the world ouer in extreme penury, and want of things, only for the gayning of the soules of others, and also to loue want and pouerty; they were almost astonished with very admiration, and for that cause they were more ready, and more easily induced to put their neckes vnder the yoke of the Ghospell. These two things do not well suite, to gaine soules, and to attend wihall to our priuate commodities and pleasures.

4. If againe, my Sonne, thou turne thy selfe to the founders of Religion, thou shalt find that they were so great louers of Pouer-ty, as they would not suffer the words *Myne* and *Thine* to haue any place amongst them, thinking that by these two words, is destroyed all the force of Pouer-ty: and if they found any Proprietary amongst them, they instantly banished and thrust him out, as an infectious person from their Company. Let them now speake, who be so much afraid of the name of Pouer-ty, whose disciples, and followers they be: What rule permitted them to haue goods and prouision of their owne? Wherefore do they take paynes to get money together, whether to couert it to their owne vse, or to leaue it to others; howsoeuer they do it, euen secular men haue not care to gather riches for any other cause.

What difference then is there betweene the Religious men, and those of the world? This is not for a man to beare heauen away by violence, but to afflict and vexe himselfe for the gathering of earthly trash together. The doctrine that I haue deliuered is not so, neither be they the followers of their founders and forefathers; and seeing they trace not the same steps with them, they will neuer come to the same degree of perfection that they did.

5. Lord, if thou giuest vs not some spur to put vs forwards to loue Pouerty, it will easily be abandoned and forsaken: for sith it carrieth an outward representation of ignobility, contempt, and basenes, and of being next vnto misery, no esteem is made therof. Sonne, thou art very much deceiued, because thou vhest not a distinction. In forced Pouerty, & that which commeth of necessity, is contemptible, and hated of the world: but voluntary Pouerty, sith it is a noble and heroicall vertue, how can it be ignoble and base? If it treadeth vnder foote, & contemneth all precious stones, and the worlds treasure, how can it be miserable? To the loue of it what may moue vs more, then to vnderstand, that I the Sonne of God, and Lord of Maiesty, when I liued on earth, be-
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throathed Pouerty vnto my selfe, and loued and intertayned it till my dying day. And should not this alone worthily induc euery Religious person to loue and honour it? For in all Courts, he is in greatest honour and regard, whome the Prince loueth most.

6. But wilt thou vnderstand my Son, who is a true louer of Pouerty? He it is, who most delighteth and reioyceth in it, who commendeth, and desireth it more then other, who thinketh not to offend it either by worke, word, or by any signe; who finally imbraceth and loueth it, as an heavenly margarite, that maketh the soule most fayre, and beautifull in the sight of the creature. O how much did the Religious before tyme to please me, who were so affected to Pouerty, as they held all the riches of this world for toyes and ordure, if they were compared with it. And for a declaration of their exceeding great affection vnto it, they called Pouerty their Lady and Queene, and for such they esteemed and vsed it. Neither did they this in the first seruour of their conuersion only, but the elder they waxed in the seruing of God, the more they loued, and reuerenced it, and for that cause they were very earnest and desirous, that they might giue vp their last breath to God vpon
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the bare ground.

7. On the contrary side, I am not a little displeased to see some Religious so little deuoted to Pouerty, as those, who discommend it, haue an horroure to it, as a thing to be detested, and by deeds also go against it. Hence it is, that in their meate and drinke, in their cloathing and habitation they will be intreated commodiously and daintly, yea & that better and more commodiously then they intreated themselves in the world; and if they haue not euery thing as they list, they betroubled, and can take no rest at all. And what an infelicity is this? They giue ouer the world to serue me, they leaue all their riches, neglect their commodities, and of themselves vow Pouerty, that they may euer lead a quiet life, and after they be once entred into Religion, they suffer themselves to be disquieted and troubled for the things that they forsooke in the world. This is nothing but to sing a song of recantation, and to reuoke their Vow of perpetuall Pouerty. For what difference is there, whether thou desire earthly riches, or superfluous commodities and recreations, when as the one and the other be repugnant to Religious Pouerty?

8. But it displeaseth me more, that there

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there be some, who not finding in Religion all abundance of things, as they had in the world, do looke backe, and craue their commodities first of one secular man, and then of another, and make themselues their vassalls and slaves. And if so to do for their owne vse and commodity, be bad; how much worse it is then, to exact such things of secular men, that they may be giuen to others? Is it possible, that any Religious man should be found, who should bind himselfe to secular men, for the doing of good turnes to others? O infamous madnes of such a Religious person, who for so base a thing maketh himself a vassal to so many! Of this bad fountaine doth spring for the most part all that loosenesse, dissolution, and breach of good order, and Religious discipline, which we see (a thing to be lamented) in many Religious with our own eyes. Woe be to that Religion, the Religious wherof be no louers of Pouerty, for that by their ouermuch liberty of manners and life they become the ruine and ouerthrow of Religion.

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*The Mirrour of
Of the dignity, and commendation of
Religious Pouerty.*

CHAP. VIII.

Sonne, I haue not without cause in my Ghospell amongst the Beatituds giuen the first place to Pouerty, and bequeathed the Kingdome of heauen to the poore, for without Euangelicall perfection it is impossible to come to blisse. Seing then Pouerty is the first foundation of Euangelicall Perfection, of good right it meriteth the preheminence of the first place. For which cause I haue sent all those, whome I haue inuited to follow me, or haue been desirous of perfection, it they did not of their owne accord renounce the riches of the world, or did not voluntarily become poore, to the first foundation, that they should first forsake all, and then follow me. Perfection would not haue men bound, but free and loose.

2. Lord, if the kingdome of heauen be for the poore, very great will the number of the blessed be, because there be more poore in the world, then rich. True it is, my Sonne, that the Kindgome of heauen is for the poore, yet all the poore be not for heauen,

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heaven, but only thole, who make an election to be poore, and such be very few. Some there be, who indeed be not possessed of any thing in this life, yet they haue it in desire, and this pouerty is not only no vertue nor worthy of praise, but also spoyleth many of their eternall felicity, both for that it taketh not away the exceeding desire of hauing, which is the roote of all euills; and also for that it setteth it on fire so fare, as it maketh a mans mind deuoyd of all manner of peace and quiet: Whence it is, that many become robbers, theeues, and do not admit any cogitation of heauen at all.

3. Some be possessed of great store of riches, but they tye not their affection vnto them, yea they be ready, when it shall please me, and when I shall thinke good, to leaue them: and of such poore in spirit there be found very few in the world. Finally some there be, who that they may be the more free in the exercise of true vertue, do contemne and forsake all earthly riches, not only out of an affection of mind, but by effect of workes also. So did my Apostles, & many other Religious, who be now in present possession of the riches of heauen. And this is Religious Pouerty, whereunto I haue promised the kingdome of heauen, where

where all the Religious shall be crowned with the most noble crowne of glory: but the number of these is very small.

4. If the kingdome of heauen could be bought with money, or exchanged with kingdomes and riches of the world, great would be the excellency and dignity of the goods of fortune, and euery one might loue them, as his owne soule. This excellency I haue imparted to Religious Pouerty, which of terrene riches maketh a ladder, whereby it may mount vp to heauen. Contrariwise the rich of the world dig the earth for the getting of gold and siluer out of her bowels, and therein they place and fixe their hart, and bury it with the renouncing of heauen together with the true felicity therof. But the poore Religious man, because he directeth his hart to heauen, maketh himselfe worthy of an heauenly reward. What manner of way a man shall enter into, such shall he find the end of it.

5. Besides, a Religious man by the Vow of Pouerty becometh superiour to the whol world, and aboue it. For whereas he desireth not to possesse any thing in this life as his owne, he hath no dependance on the world, or the things therof, but as one aboue it, he contemneth all, that is within the compasse,

compasse, or power of it. The contrary hapneth to such as be addicted to the world, who be at the commaund of so many maisters, as be the things that they desire to haue and possesse.

6. Moreover Religious Pouerty manifesteth a certaine power and might against the nature of man it selfe. For nature desireth and inclineth a man to desire riches, and the commodities of the body, as the delicacies of meats, nicenesse of apparel, sports pastimes, and recreations; but Religious Pouerty withdraweth all these from it selfe for my sake, and therefore ouercometh Nature. And how then should not I highly esteeme them, who wittingly and willingly, moued out of loue of me alone, do deprive themselues of al these lawfull commodities, and whereunto Nature of it selfe inuiteth them?

7. Heare also, my Sonne, another excellency of Religious Pouerty. If any needy or poore man become rich by his owne industry, or by any other occasion, the world meruayleth not: but it wondreth much, if a rich man become voluntarily poore, and such a one indeed, as doeth not only make away his riches, but also depriuerh himself of the power and ability of possessing them

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foreeuer after. And at this the world is astonished the more, for that it selfe hath nothing in more esteeme then riches of the world, & runneth nothing with a greater care, then Pouerty. All this proceedeth of nothing els, then that it vnderstandeth not the dignity and excellency of Religious Pouerty. Let the world tell me: Can it with all it owne riches, and pleasures satiate and fill a mans hart, so as it may be at quiet? Nothing lesse: for that as many as be louers of the world, the more they haue, the more desire they to haue, and whiles they cannot be satisfied with what they haue got, they neuer arriue to any true peace and quiet of mind. But the Religious, who neither haue anything proper, of their own, nor desire to haue, liue content with very little. Is not this a certaine participation of euerlasting felicity, that a man, as he shall one day liue content in heauen with the glory thereof, so liueth now on earth content, & quiet with his Religious Pouerty?

8. Neither is it the least commendation of Religious Pouerty, that it not only conserueth, and keepeth the Religious, but hath further beene the foundresse of all Religions, as many as haue beene, and still be in Gods Church. The monasteries indeed,

and

and the Cloisters be erected and built with money, and the goods of fortune; but the Religious be not founded by them. For the first founders, who had store of riches, for the consecrating of themselves to my service did giue away their riches, as impediments to a better course of life. And after a good foundation layd of the spirit of Pouerty, and of mortification; I vsed them as directors and guides for the drawing of others, and by this means Religions were founded. Stones, and tymber be laid and rayled by riches, but vertues are built & raised by Pouerty of spirit.

9. But suppose, that there were not any thing worthy of cōmendation, or excellent in Pouerty; is it not a great dignity, that it is loued of me, and esteemed of me? That it was to me an inseparable & fast companion during the whole course of my life? That I vsed the help of it in the worlds conuersion, not by sending the rich, mighty, and wise, but the poore ignorant & rude for the ouercoming of the wise & mighty of the world? That I wrought so great miracles by men poore and abiect for the good of soules? Do not these seeme vnto thee any commendations and renowne of Religious pouerty? And if they be great prayes; haue not I, my

Sonne, most iust cause to complaine of the,
 who do not only not loue Pouerty, but do
 also without cause contemne it? That it is
 contemned of the world, is no meruayle,
 because the profession & scope therof night
 and day is to attend to the heaping vp of
 riches, and increasing of honours: but that
 there should be any religious found, who by
 deeds refuse the same, and vnder hand pra-
 ise it, is a thing that highly displeaseth me,
 whiles I behold that Lady and Queen pro-
 mised me by Religious and Solemne Vow,
 which should haue a commaunding hand
 with them, so impudently and shamefully
 thrust out. Spiritual things cannot be loued
 without a spirit.

*Of the vtility and profit, that voluntary
 Pouerty bringeth to the Religious.*

CHAP. IX.

LORD, what good and profit can Reli-
 gious Pouerty bring, sith it hath no-
 thing, wherby it may ease mans necessities?
 And more then that, in regard of the incō-
 modities that be adioyned thereto, it sec-
 meth preiudicial, not to the body alone, but
 to the soule also. For the body being ill
 handled therby, easily falleth into sicknes,
 and

and being ill disposed, cannot serue and attend to the spirituall actions of the soule, neither can the mind it self vte the ordinary exercise of prayer, and meditation. Besides it is no little impediment to the Religious, who towards the helping of their neighbours, do profess an active life. For if they want things necessary, they are notable to go through with their labours, in helping their neighbours. Therefore it seemeth to me that Pouerty is an impediment to much good, and contrariwise promoteth what is ill, as is sicknes and other infirmities, yea & hasteneth death it selfe.

2. Sonne, thou art far wide of thy marke: for thou thinkest that Religious Pouerty is a seuer and cruell Mistresse that withdraweth from the Religious things necessary towards their meate, drinke and cloathing, according to a requisite proportion required in their institute. It is not so. Pouerty by frugality is good, both for the soule & body, & profiteth a man more, then do the riches and pleasures of the world. For in the first place the desire of transitory honours doth so torment a mans mind, as it depriueth him of all quiet, pricketh him forward to sucke vp the bloud of the poore, and bringeth him to so great a blindness, as

it bereaueth him of all feare of God & men, without any regard had of his owne soules good. Neither do men desirous of getting more, make a stand heere.

3. He that is once become rich, eftsoons railleth vp his head, becometh arrogant and proud, vndertaketh to patronize the wicked, and out of a madnes runneth headlong into all naughtines. From these euills, and many more, voluntary Pouerty freeth the mind, whiles it doth take from him not only the riches that he hath, but also the hope & desire of hauing, which is the beginning of ruine both of body and soule, and procureth such tranquillity and peace, as it maketh the mind fit and disposed to the contemplation of heavenly things, and to all manner of spirituall actions. Whence it is, that a Religious man, so soone as he is become poore, consequently becometh humble, modest, meeke, a friend of the good, and of vertue, and an enemy of the bad, and a contemner of vices.

4. That Pouerty also profiteth the body, is out of question. We do not desire any thing more earnestly for the body, then good health: and we haue an horreur of nothing more then of sicknes: for there is not any who would not be rather poore and whole,

whole, then rich and sicke. And dayly experience manifestly teacheth, that the frugality of pouerty conserueth the good health of body, prolongeth and continueth mans life more yeares, then dothall the store of riches and pleasures. Who seeth not, that the poore be more healthfull, & go through with more labours, then do the rich? A poore man is as well content with a simple, ordinary, & meane dyet, as be the rich with dainty and delicate fare. The poore man cometh euer hungry to his meate: the little that he hath he eateth with a good appetite: whē he is a thirist he refuseth not a draught of watter: after labour he seeketh not for a soft bed, but he sleepeth, lyeth downe, & taketh his rest where it hapneth at aduentures: and in the morning he riseth early with meate digested, sound, and healthfull and without loathing.

5. On the contrary, the rich man, seru-
ing the time ordinarily, sitteth downe to
the table with a full stomake, taketh very
little tast or pleasure in his meate, scarce
sleepeth by night, but turneth himselfe euer
and anone, now to one side of the bed now
to another: & therefore the Phisitian must
euer be at hand, and drugs prepared in his
chamber ready to take vpon euery occasion.

Loc thus be they turmoiled, who liue in delicacies: they liue badly, and dye soone. My seruants did not in times past liue so in the wildernesse, who professed so great Pouerty, as some when they besprinckled their herbs with a little salt, or oyle, thought they had made a feast; and yet these men neuer vsing the benefit of Physitian, or of phisicke, liued to very old age, and therfore Religious Pouerty is not (as thou thinkest) the cause either of infirmities or of hastning thy death. Nothing hurtieth ones health so much, as the variety and abundance of the meate.

6. Religious Pouerty bringeth another commodity with it, and that is security, voyd of all suspicion, and sinister thoughts. He, that aboundeth in wealth, is afraid of theeuers, not only from abroad, but of his own house also. And not without cause: for many, whiles they see they cannot come to the riches they desire, do first spoyle them of life, and then of their riches. How many sonnes haue killed or poysoned their Parents that they might the sooner come to enioy their inheritance? How many treasons, & treacheries haue there beene wrought against most deare friends, for the spoiling them of their treasures? But the poore sleep
in

in security, they trauayle night and day out of all teare, they are troubled with no suspicions, because they haue nothing to loose. Adde to this also, that Pouerty hindreth none in his trauayle, nor bringeth in, or causeth any forgetfulness of the Kingdome of heauen, which is occasioned by riches, but rather vrgeth and forceth vs to thinke more often vpon the beauty of our heauenly country, and vpon the great treasures there prepared for vs.

7. Lord, at the day of iudgment thou wilt make them only partaker of the Kingdome of heauen, who for loue of thee shall haue afforded meate and drink to the needy and shal haue holpen them in all their other necessities: and what socuer shall be done vnto them, thou wilt haue reputed to be done to thy selfe. If it be so, what reward shall come to the poore Religious, who when in their entrance to Religion, they haue renounced all their possessions, haue not wherewith to relieue them? Wherefore it seemeth they might haue done more wisely, if they had reserued some part of their goods to giue afterward to the poore.

8. Sonne to giue almes to the poore, is a good worke, and meritorious of life euerlasting: but it is a far more excellent

worke for a man to forsake both all his possessions & the world also, & to follow me. Hence it is, that I did not counsaile that rich yong man in the Ghospell, who asked me, what was needfull for him to do to attaine to a perfect life, to stay in the world, and to giue much almes to the poore, but that himselfe after distribution of all his goods vpon the poore, should become also poore, & so follow me in my Pouerty. And therefore the Religious need not to feare in the day of iudgment: For seeing they haue for the loue of me forsaken not only all that they had, but all they might haue had in the world also, they exercise a most noble, and perfect worke, which in that day shall be recompensed and payd with a most abundant reward of euerlasting felicity. He is not bound to giue almes, who hath distributed all that he had to the poore at once, and hath nothing left him to giue.

9. Seeing then by the so great commendations, and vtilities of Religious Pouerty it may euidently appeare, that secular men be greatly deceiued, who seeke with so great a desire to heape vp riches; how great an errour, thinke we, doth a Religious man commit, if he should in like manner study to get money together, who by Vow of Pouerty

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uerty hath renounced it for euer? What folly and madness would it be for him, whiles he forsaketh the world, to haue a will to go out naked, that when he were to fight with the Diuell, he might not haue wherewith his enemy should take hold by, to throw him to the ground, and now to haue a will to be clad in Religion, that he may be with the more ease laid hand on, & ouerthrowne by the enemy? The Diuell, when he findeth not whercon to fasten, or to lay any hold, goeth his way ouercome, and vanquished, or leauech of to molest and trouble.

How God, euen in this life, rewardeth the Religious for their Vow of Pouertry.

C H A P. X.

SUNNE, I am he, who affoord necessaries to the whole world: I commaund the Sunne to shine as well vpon the good, as the bad: I send downe raine in tymes and seasons: I cause the earth to bring forth fruits, plants, and all liuing things, and the Sea to abound in fish, to the end euery kind according to the condition of their nature may haue helps agreeable therunto. Neither doth it be seeme me, the Creatour of all, to be overcome of man, that he should giue me
more

more, then I giue him. And therefore sith the Religious do by Vow of Pouerty giue themselves, and whatsoeuer they haue in the world, and to the end they may serue me the more readily, and the more at ease, they renounce all their possessions, honors, commodities and recreations otherwise lawful, and further bind themselves by band of perpetuall Vow, that they may not at any time be able to go backe from the profession of Pouerty; meet it is, that I in like manner promise to afford them all necessities for their sustenance.

2. First then I requite this their so feruent loue and liberality towards me in such sort; as I consecrate my selfe wholly vnto them, as I did vndertake long since in the person of *Aaron* to do, to whome I said, *That I would be his inherisance*, vnderstanding and meaning in this figure all the Religious. Thus I make my selfe their procuratour & dispenser. Neither do I hold it inough for my selfe to sustayne the person of a good Lord towards his faithfull seruants, but I further reckon them, as doth a most louing Father of his dearest children. And if the birds and fowles of the ayre be so carefull to seeke and prouide for necessaryes for the feeding of their yongones; wilt thou haue me

me to forget my Religious children, who do in their Monasteries, as in their nests, expect their sustenance? Wilt thou not haue them clad with necessary cloathing, who haue for my sake spoiled themselues of all their commodities of body, retayning nothing as their owne? He standeth in need of nothing, of whome God taketh a care.

3. Wherefore know thou, that I haue provided, and still dayly do, necessary helps for all, because neither there be the same functions of all, neither do all follow the same manner of liuing. For I haue caused those, who liue seperatly, and, as touching their owne person, depriued of al dominion of their possessions, that they may serue me in this degree of Pouerty, to be provided of possessions in common, wherof euery one may haue the meanes to entertaine life. Againe, I help others, who haue imbraced the lawes of a more strict Pouerty, in so much as they will not euen in cōmon inioy any stable or certaine rents, by mouing the harts of the faithfull, now one, then another to be willing and ready to prouide for euery one conformably to his rule, and vocation. Be not thou on thy part wanting vnto God, and God will not be wanting vnto thee.

4. And that we may come nearer to the remuneration,

remuneration, that I make to the Religious in this life also, for the recompence of the Vow of Pouerty, tell me, my Sonne, wherefore when any one of thy order cometh frō some foraine part to thy monastery for his lodging, all come running to giue him all things necessary? For what cause is this done? In very deed for no other, then for the Vow of Pouerty, & that is a part of the compensation, that is due to Religious Pouerty. If that guest should haue any prouision of his owne, whereof he might liue, euery one would forbear to help him, neither would there want murmurers, who would say, this man is rich inough at home, no doubt but he cometh hither to spend what is ours, that he might spare his owne. But it is nothing so. For seeing none can be ignorāt, that he by reason of his Vow of Pouerty, neither hath, nor can haue any thing of his owne, therefore all necessities be with charity and good will afforded him.

5. Againe, with what a company of cars is a secular man troubled and turmoyled for the prouiding of his family with such thinges, as peraduenture as appertayne to meate, drinke, and cleaths: how often passeth he whole nights without sleep, taking care and sollicitude, where, how, and what way

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way he may remedy his present want? how often lameth he & weepeth, while he findeth not the meanes to help himselfe; or others? Doth not he seeme, my Sonne, vnto thee happy, who is exempted from all such sollicitude? Holdest not thou him much priuiledged, who deuoyd of cares, hath others to procure him all necessaryes? And whence haue the Religious this priuiledge but by me, in regard of the Vow of Pouertry.

6. Consider also, my Sonne, that a Religious man, if it be his happe to trauaile through other countreys, and to come to the houses of his order, is very kindly and louingly intertayned, and welcomed with much Charity, although they neuer saw the man before; offer themselues to do him seruice, for this respect alone, that they vnderstand him to be their brother, & a child of the same mother, that is Religion, with them. When he cometh thither, all thinges be there as common vnto him, as they be vnto those, who make their habitatiō there, and therefore for one house that he left in the world for the loue of me, he findeth a thousand other better then his owne. And this is to haue nothing, and yet to possesse all.

7. There is not a Prince so commodiously

ously treated as he is when he is out of the territories and lymits of his owne gouernement. For in his Inne he is courteously wellcomed, and intertayned by the host of the house for no other cause then for the gaine he hopeth from him; and whosoever bringeth not necessary prouision with him, is wont to make great expenses, and to beare with many incommodities, because he taketh not vp his lodging in his own house as the Religious doth, and whatsoeuer seruice is done him, it is done for his money, and not for loue, as is done in Religion. Thou now seest, how much better in this kind the condition of a poore Religious man is, then is that of the mighty & rich, & this for nothing els, but for the Vow of Pouerty, through the benefit whereof he enioyeth many priuiledges, and commodities whereof he was not the authour or cause himselfe.

8. It is indeed true, that the manner of a Religious mans living and intertayning is meane and slender, but if thou diligently consider the conditions of it, thou wilt not doubt to preferre it before the tables and diet of great Princes. For first, all that a Religious man eateth, is bestowed vpon him for the loue of me: all is prepared and dressed

dressed of loue: and all out of the same loue of my seruants brought to the table afterwards: and whatsoeuer is set before him, he eateth and drinketh without any suspicion at all. But what Prince is there in the world, who is serued meerely, and purely for the loue of God? In what Princes court be things serued in so great peace, as in Religion? Whence come so many forecasts in Princes tables, but of the suspicion of poyson? And who seeth not, that a greater esteeme is to be made of loue and security wherewith the Religious are serued, then of all the magnificall ministeryes & seruices of Princes?

9. The Religious also be not deprived of their wonted attendance, euen in their old age. But he that hath done seruice to temporall Lords, when he once commeth to be old, when he is scarce of ability to do his wonted offices of seruice, though he be not thrust out of the house, is neuerthelesse hardly endured in the sight of others, neither is vsed according to his desertings, though he haue spent his whole life in his Lords service, but is held for an vnprofitable person, not fit for any seruice. Contrariwise a poore Religious man, the more he is aduanced in yeares, the more respect is had

of him, and the more commodiously is he treated: neither is there considered in him, what he doth for the present, but what he did before time, and all cast their eyes vpon him, as vpon my seruant, and a man consecrated to me. Not old age, but an vntoward and peruerse will causeth the Religious to fall from my grace and fauour. A spirituall Religiousman, and aged, who can take no longer paynes, serueth me more profitably, then many strong and able yong men, and those voyd of spirit. I in my seruants consider not so much their forces and strength of body, as their will, and spirit, which waxeth old, and dyeth not through the fault of age, but of a peruerse custome.

10. Finally, a Religious poore man is tended more carefully, more faythfully, and more louingly in sicknes, then be secular Lords. For they obserue the Phisitions prescriptions most exactly, and there be euer both day and night at hand those who attend them in their sicknes. If there be any daunger of life, they be admonished and put in mind in good time to prepare themselves to their death. At his dying many of my seruants are about him, with their prayers, and good exhortations, assisting him in his happy passage to another life. Certes, if a Religious

Religious man were to haue none other reward in this life, this alone ought to seeme vnto him inough, being so singular and excellent a thing, as many Princes, and great men of the world haue much desired it, and yet could not obtayne it. For how many of them haue ended their liues without any preparation going before, for that they were not put in mind of their danger? And how many againe, togeather with their temporall life haue lost the eternall? And if the reward of my Religious be such in this life, what wil that be, that is prepared for them in the next? What manner of crowne shall be giuen them in my Court for the Vow of Pouerty? How many great Lords astonished at their excesse of glory, will say: We esteemed their Pouerty nothing but madnes, but we were mad, and they wise indeed?

*Of the necessity of the obseruing the Vow
of Pouerty.*

CHAP. XI.

IN my Ghospell I resembled riches vnto thornes, & worthily. For thornes hinder and let trauaylers in their way, that they cannot go on with expedition, because they

are afraid of the pricking of the thornes. In like manner the thornes taken in hand do pricke, and being pressed, they draw the bloud, and put a man to payne. Therefore great is the priuiledge of them, who haue lest them beind, and whiles they are vpon their way, haue them no more in sight. For to handle the pricks of the thornes, & not to be prickt, if it be not impossible, at least it is very hard, and it profiteth little whether the pricks be great or small, many or few, because all do pricke, and euer pricke: Euen for riches do greatly hinder such as trauaile towards heauen, and do weary a man much with the bearing of them.

2. To haue any thing proper, and not to be affected vnto it, is not graunted to many, much lesse to all. The affection is that, which bringeth forth the thorns of cogitations, suspitions, & cares of gathering riches together, whercunto the more a man shall giue his mind, the more shall he be prickt and bebloudy himselfe. Wherefore not to abound in riches, or to be bound to leaue them, is an exceeding great benefit, and in it consisteth the Vow of Religious Pouerty.

3. But it is not inough, Sonne, to make Vowes, if they be not performed; for that the end of a Vow is to obserue it by deeds & actions.

actions. Remember therefore, that thou art bound of thine owne accord to perpetuall Pouerty (which amongst the morall and religious vertues is the principall) and that the obligation was made in my sight. But by contrary works to exempt thy selfe from thy Vow, is nothing els, then to denounce war against the chiefeft vertue of al, which thou hast chosen for thy Lady, and Patronesse, and therby so to incurre the punishment of violating thy obligation, that is, euerlasting damnation, & to offend me thy Creatour and Benefactour, who accepted thy Vow. And now iudge thou, how necessary it is for thee to stand to thy promises once made to me, which as they profit to saluation when they be well kept, so being broken they damne eternally.

4. Lord, seeing riches be so troublesome and dangerous, and yet a man needeth meate, drinke, and cloathing necessary to the sustentation of life, it should be inough for thee, if we should at least be in the number of those poore, whome holy writ commendeth in these words: *Blessed is the man, who hath not gone after gold, nor hath put his hope in the treasures of money:* For so we might be possessed of some necessary things, the affection being remoued from the money, without

preiudice or breach of the Vow of Pouterty. It istrue, Sounc, that *Blessed is he who is not gone after gold*: but the Scripture addeth by and by after: *VVho is he, and we will prayse him?* Who is he that desireth not gold? Who is he that desireth not to keep it, after he hath got it, and also to increase it? If thou go not after gold, gold will come after thee, and will like vnto thorns cleaue fast to thy cloathing, & though it pricke thee not, yet will it hinder thy going. Wherefore the Vow of Pouterty quite debarreth all possession of ones owne, whether it be much or little. Neither must thou be sollicitous about thy meate, drinke, and cloathing: leaue that care to me, let thine endeaour only be to satisfy thy Vow of Pouterty, and I will provide other necessaries. Who putteth his hope in any other then God, he doth God an iniury, and shall find himselfe deceiued.

5. Remember that Pouterty is called the wall of Religion, and the mother of the Religious. As long as a Citties wall is sound and whole, it is easily defended and kept from the incursion of theeues, and enemies, but if it be broken downe, or be decayed, the enemy easily breaketh in, and spoyleth it. Euen so Pouterty, which is the wall of Religious discipline, if it be either contemned

or

or neglected, so as some propriety be admitted, becometh obnoxious and subiect to the enemyes spoyle. And therefore need there is, thou keep and defend the wall, if thou desire to keep and gard thy selfe.

6. Who in time of warre watcheth vpon the walls, must haue two conditions. One, that he watch, the other that he suffer not himself to be wonne with bribes. These two conditions be in a Religious man, that voluntarily imbraceth Pouerty, who liuing sparingly, is not molested, or ouerpressed with troubles in his sleep, and because he is not a proprietary, his enemyes do not easily corrupt him with brybes. Wherefore there is not a more vigilant keeper, nor a more stout defender of the wall of Religion, then a truely Religious poore man. Besides, necessary it is, that the Citty walls be often looked vpon, that where and when need is, they may be repaired, and strengthened. For if they shall begin once either to decay, or to bend and incline to one part, a remedy will hardly be found. So the Pouerty of Religio must often be examined, and looked into, that it be not in any part loosened, and if it happen to be, that it be repayred againe. For so Religion will be more strongly fortified, and the state therof the more secured. For

as the first drift of the enemy is to vndermine and ouerthrow the walls of some bulwarke; so the greatest care of them, who defend it, must be, that the walls be conserued and kept.

7. It is also called the mother of the Religious, because Pouerty is that which first communicateth to a Religious man his very essence and nature, and nourisheth and bringeth him vp. True it is, that she is somewhat seuerē in the educatiō of her children, not for that she withdraweth frō them some commodities necessary, but rather superfluous: yet she doth it for a good end, namely, that her children may become valiant souldiers, and fight manfully against all kind of vices. For she well knoweth, that a man brought vp in delicacy, and nothing accustomed to the enduring of labours, cannot be a good souldier. Amongst the conditions of this mother one is, that to her children that loue her, she is deare and gratefull, and to them that loue her not, leuere and sterne; and whosoeuer is bound to be vnder the gouernment of such a Mother, if he shall refuse to accommodate himselfe vnto her, he shall not be without a continuall affliction all his life long.

8. If it displease thee, Sonne, to haue
such

such a Mother, remember that Pouerty hath not chosen thee for her Sonne, but contrarywise; that thou hast chosen her for thy Mother; & she accepted thee for her Sonne. Thou also in regard of thy Vow art bound perpetually to lead thy life with such a Mother, and therefore it is not any longer in thy power to leaue her off, thou being bound to loue, honour, and defend her. Tell me, should not that Sonne sinne grievously, who should handle his Mother ill & rudely, or should thrust her out of her house? And what other thing is it for thee to enjoy and vse some little thinges for the satisfying of thync owne desire, but wickedly to handle thy Mother, Pouerty? And nothing to regard her, what is it els, then to drive her out of thy hart, which is her habitation, and house to dwell in? Take heed, my Sonne, what thou dost, because all the hurt returneth vpon thine owne head, sith it is certaine, that she needeth not thy seruice, but thou needest her help; neither canst thou lead a Religious life without her: she is not bound to thee, but thou to her. The Kingdome of heauen belongeth to the poore, but he that will not know Pouerty for his Mother, shall neither haue part in that inheritance which is the kingdom of heauen.

9. Lord, I know and vnderstand wel, that to make the Vow of Pouerty, is nothing els, then to promise to thy maicesty, that I neither will haue, nor haue a will to haue any thing proper, and will lead my life in Pouerty. But I long to know, whether I can satisfy my Vow of Pouerty, if I possesse nothing of myne owne, and yet all things are pleasing vnto me, and agreeable to my manner of doing.

10. Sonne, as it pleaseth me, that euery one be provided of thinges necessary: so it displeaseth me, if a Religious man either haue, or procureth to haue superfluityes. But what is necessary, or profitable, it is not for thee to iudge (for we be easily beguiled by our senses, or our owne affection) but thy Superiour. It is for the Supetiour to iudge, what is conuenient for Pouerty. He is not poore who wanteth nothing, neither liueth he after the māner of the poore, who hath all things, as he listeth.

*Of the defects, that are committed
against Pouerty.*

CHAP. XII.

SONNE, he that is provided of rents after the manner of poore, & yet will, like
vnto

vnto the rich, make great expences, goeth greatly awry: for he shall within a while find himselfe so sorely engaged, as he must be forced to lye in prison, and there be punished, vntill he shall haue payed the very last farthing. Whatsoever thou hast in Religion, is giuen thee by me, and for me, and I haue giuen it thee, as to a poore man for thy vse, and necessary for thy Religion. But if thou wilt vse, and spend the thinges of Religion, after the manner of the rich, at thyne owne will, as though thou wert an absolute owner thereof, it will fall out ill with thee, because thou art one day to giue a strait accompt of all. Thou hast forsaken all that thou hast in the world, and that thou mightest not vse them at thyne owne will, thou art spoiled of them: Why then doest thou in Religion thinke to vsurpe a dominion vpon another mans goods, and to dispose of them at thy list? This, certes, is neither conuenient, nor pleasing to me. Wherefore thou must needs resolue to vse the thinges of Religion, as my things, and consecrated to me, and what is transferred to thy owne vse, thou art to handle not as thine, but as myne, allowed of me to thee by thy Superiour, and that to serue thy vse as long as it shall please me, so as it is in my will

will to take it from thee, when it shall to me seeme good.

2. It doth displease me much, when a Religious man is transported with so great a desire to something that is permitted him to vse, as he can hardly forgoe it againe, when reason requireth. For what manner of beast should that be, who being hired to beare burdens, would not haue the instruments afterward taken from him, that were fit to beare the burden with ease? Whatsoeuer Religion assigneth to euery one, it doth it for my seruice, & whether I would take something away from any, or permit him to vse it still, he must not be therefore grieued, or troubled. An ouer great affection to thinges lent, maketh them to become anothers.

3. O how much do those Religious offend me, who be ashamed to be poore, & to weare a poore garment, or to vse a slender dyet. For how can it be they should be ashamed for that, which is to them a glory, by the benefit whereof they are raised to so high a state, and maketh them like their Lord and Maister? Could they be forgetfull of their promise made of Pouerty? If they haue not forgotten it, wherefore do they so lightly esteeme it? What man is there in the world,

world, who would be ashamed of his profession? And sith the Religious man hath made a profession of Pouerty, and that publicly, what is the cause, that he is ashamed of it? Some seruants of myne did not so who now enioy eternall felicity in heauen, who were rather confounded, if they found any more poore then themselves. Who is ashamed of vertue, plainly declareth that he loueth it not. An euill signe it is to hate Pouerty, which is a principall vertue, and proper to Religious life.

4. There be others, who are ashamed of their parents pouerty; and some againe who brag and boast of their riches, and both of these be affections of a Religious man ill mortified. That the Parents be rich, is not a vertue, wherefore then should a Religious man glory of them? Yea the richer they be, in the greater danger be the Religious, least they one day looke backe, and for that cause they haue greater matter of feare, then of glorying. And that thy parents be poore, was it through any fault of thynce? & if not, wherfor shouldst thou be ashamed, or afflicted for it? If to be poore in the world should be a crime, thou shouldest haue a iust cause of confusion: but it is not. Or if Pouerty should make the way to heauen more hard,

hard, thou mightst worthily be sory, and complaine: but it is more then certaine, that the coming to it is made hard, not by Pouerty and want, but by riches. Wilt thou haue thy Parents rich? Procure then that they may be vertuous, & content with their estate: for so they shall be in Gods grace and friendship, which by many degrees surpasseth all the riches and honours of this life. The Religious man that hath a desire his Parents should be great and honorable in the world, and laboureth not that they be prouided of spirituall riches, sheweth himselfe to haue very little charity, and no spirit at all.

5. It is also a sore defect in the Vow of Pouerty, if a man thinke he hath done inough, when he possesseth nothing as his owne, and in the meane time is sollicitous, that he may want nothing. Certes, I see not how there can be any coherence betweene these two. To make a Vow of Pouerty, and not to haue a will to make a tryall of Pouerty: To be poore, and not to be willing to try the effect of it: To loue Pouerty, & yet to haue a will to be far off from it. I was my selfe poore, for that in the whole course of my life I experienced the effects of Pouerty, by suffering hunger, thirst, heat, cold, wearines,

wearines, nakednes, and a thousand incommodities. I loued Pouer ty, and therefore I would haue it to accompany me to my Crosse, where I was nayled naked vnto it. My Apostles also, and some of my disciples and followers suffred many incommodities of Pouer ty, euen vntill their dying day. But thou not only seekest no occasion of suffering any thing, after the manner of poore persons, in thy meate, drinke, & cloathing, but further most carefully, and importunely thou seekest for what is best, and more commodious, and if thou haue it not, thou art troubled, and murmurest for it, and which is worse, thou oftentimes pretendest necessity and health, when it is thy meere sensuality. He is not poore, who shunneth the incommodities of the poore. O how did those Religious please me, who notwithstanding they were destitute of ordinary things, and of necessary sometimes also, yet complained not, nor were sory for it, but with ioy sayd: This is to be a poore one of Christ, his name be euer blessed for it.

6. Those also, who are not content with the common entertainment of Religion, but without iust cause desire either some particularities, or not necessaryes, do sorely weaken, yea and ouerthrow their Vow of Pouer ty

Pouerty. For in the one there is more superfluity; in the other there be made expenses without necessity, and both of them be repugnant to Pouerty, whereof it is commonly sayd, *As much as is enough, and no more.* To vse parsimony in the things of Religio, and to spend them but when necessity requireth, is not misery (as the haters of Pouerty will haue it) but an act of vertue, because Pouerty exacteth it.

7. It is also a vice and fault, repugnant to Religious Pouerty, both to take thinges without the Superiours leaue, and to giue them vnto others. For whatlocuer is giuen to a Religious man, is the Religious, not the mans, who cannot haue any thing proper, and therefore if he accepteth of gifts, he sheweth himselfe a proprietary: so if he giueth any thing to another, he maketh a shew that himselfe is the owner therof, and both the one and the other, that is, propriety, & dominion be repugnant to Religious Pouerty. Neither is that Religious man altogether free from fault, who accepteth, or giueth thinges of very little value, sith in the Vow of Pouerty there is not any exception made of things little or great, but he hath absolutely promised, that he will not vsurpe any propriety in any thing, either
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little or great, nor take any dominion to himselfe therein. An error in little and light things, doth not forgo the name of an error.

8. Finally Pouerty is an hurt, when the expenses be superfluous, and the thinges that be bought, be rather curious and faire, then profitable and necessary. He that is truly poore, and imbraceth Pouerty with sincerity, laboureth to do what it required and no more. For what difference is it for a religious man to have a faire gilded book or a garment sowed with silke; when as a booke not gilded might serue him as well as gilded, and a garment sown with common thrid, would be as good for him, as sowne with silke? And if the one consorteth more with Pouerty, then the other, why will he not conforme himselfe to Pouerty? In like manner tell me, I pray thee, what is the cause, that a Religious man retayneth and keepeth other mens things in his chamber, that do him no good, and yet might profit others? Is not that superfluous, that hindreth anothers good?

9. Sonne, thou hast a desire to be receiued into the number of the poore, either in earth or in heauen. If in earth, it is inough that thou hast made a Vow of Pouerty, and

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be reckoned amongst the poore, and if in heauen, it is not inough, but further there is required thou be poore in deed, that is, that thou cut off all superfluities, and exercise thy selfe continually euen till death in the acts of Pouerty, and this is to be a true Religious man. He is not to be numbred in the company of my poore, who will abound in superfluities, neither shall he come to the reward of the poore, who shall not haue made a tryall of the effects of Pouerty.

Of the Vow of Chastity, and what Religious Chastity is, & the proper office therof.

CHAP. XIII.

SONNE, if the vertue of Chastity were not, it would be greatly amisse with man sith the concupiscence of the flesh is of that nature and condition, that if it were not restrayned in time, it would make a man (otherwise indued with reason and vnderstanding) in a short time like a brute beast. For the pleasure and itching of the senses do so obscure and blind a mans mind, as they draw it into all manner of filth and vncleanes: whence it cometh to passe, that when the will is abandoned of iudgment and aduise, a man runneth in a miserable manner headlong

headlong into all wickednes. Hence it is, that a man giuen to the pleasures of the flesh is spoyled of all courage & power of doing well, speaketh & thinketh not of any other thing, then of lasciuiousnes and carnality, nor witheth any other thing, then that he may al his life long haue his fill of such kind of delights and pleasures, and for this cause he also hateth the other life. Neither doth a carnall mans madnes stay heere, but his hatred further extendeth it selfe to his Creator, who hath by his law prohibited those foule pleasures of the flesh, and condemned them. In a sensuall man the sense stayleth, and the faule increaseth.

2. Another condition of concupiscence is, that there is no good which a sensual man contemneth not, nor any euill that he committeth not; so he may enioy and compasse what he vnlawfully desireth. He hath no regard or consideration of riches, which for the satisfying of his lust and sensuality, he wasteth not: he exposeth his life to a thousand daungers: he hath no care of his health at all: he respecteth not the doing against his conscience, and to hurt his owne soule, so he may enioy his desires. Finally he preferreth his carnalities before all that is both in earth and heauen. He becometh

sensuall and beaulty, who exerciseth beastly actions.

3. A third condition of concupiscence is, that it is neuer satisfied, but increaseth more and more by sensuall pleasures, and setteth the body so on fire, as no feuer though neuer so burning and hoate, so sore tormenteth a man, as doth the concupiscence; nor any fury of hel is so turmoyled, or in so great torments, as is a luxurious man, whose burning and raging heate is so great, as it may seeme not possible to be extinguished, but by death. The flesh first tyeth a man fast, next it blinderh him, and lastly it tormenteth him. Who hath no will to be thus handled, let him not put himself into the fleshes tormenting hands.

4. With this pestiferous, and vnruely wild beast the vertue of Chastity is to make warre, who being called on for her ayde, williogly presenteth her selfe, & greatly represseth the fury of this beast, and abateth the concupiscences heat. Wherefore it is the generall office and charge of Chastity to moderate and direct all the desires of the senses according to the rule of reason, by yealding vnto euery degree of Continency what is conuenient and no more. And because there be diuers degrees of Continency,
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there be also diuers permissions and prohibitions therot which she prescribeth. In the first and lowest degree is the continency of the married, who are only forbidden vnlawfull pleasures. In the second is that of widowes; in the third that of the single and vnmarried, who do not only renounce vnlawfull pleasures of the flesh, but also the lawfull which they might enioy without sinne, if they had a will to marry. In the fourth degree is Continency of Virgins, which as it is more perfect then the aforesaid, so deserueth it a greater reward, the perfection wherof consisteth not only in a firme purpose of contayning from all manner of venereous pleasures, but also in the perpetual conseruation of virginal Chastity. In the fifth and highest degree is placed the cōtinency of religious, which though it be not sometymes Virginall, is yet in perfectiō more excellent then the rest, for that it is by Vow consecrated vnto me, which because it is an act of excellent Charity, and of the greatest of all the morall vertue, namely of Religion, causeth greatest perfection, and excellency to Religious Continency.

5. Now the law of Chastity commandeth Religious Continency to exercise three

offices worthy of it selfe. The first is, to conserue the purity of the flesh, whereunto is required a great courage. For sith the flesh of it selfe is prone to incontineney, and impurity, a great alacrity and courage of mind is necessary towards the keeping of it ynder, that a man, who naturally loueth and fauoureth his owne flesh, nor easily suffereth it to be afflicted, giue it not the bridle ouer much, nor plunge himselfe into the myre & puddle of carnall pleasures. A second office is to keep a gard over the senses, and therunto needeth vigilancy, and diligence. For seing the senses be wandering and slippery, & present a thousand occasions of such pleasures, ynles a Religious man shal be very diligent in keeping them, they will easily breake out beyond their bands. The third office is to conserue the purity of the mind ynstayned, wherein circumspection is very necessary for the considering & examining of what is admitted thereunto. And if there be anything that may stayne or infect, it must be kept out, for that it is more easy to keep it from entring, then to thrust it out, after it be entred.

6. Sonne, this is the law of Religious Chastity, and these be the offices thereof. If thou desire to be holpen thereby, seeing
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for that end thou requirest the ayde of it, thou must also needs fauour it, and not deny it thyne help, that it may discharge it owne office. If thou shouldst deny this thou shouldst do, as if thou calledst a Phisitian home vnto thee, but wouldst not haue him to touch the sicke mans wound for feare of the payne, or loathing that would follow. This is not the way of curing the sicke body, but of increasing his sicknes rather. The body inured to pleasure, is wont to complaine, that Chastity is euer exact and seuer in executiō of the precepts of her laws, which forbids many things and permits few. But these be the complaints of the nyce, delicate and sensuall sicke, who ordinarily desire & long for the thinges that be most hurtfull vnto them, which if they be yealded vnto, do hurt them, and therefore such things be more discretly denyed them. Suffer the Phisitian my Sonne, to put his hand to the yron; for the loathsome sore of carnall concupiscence, vnles it be launched in tyme, will easily grow to a festred, and pestiferous impostume. He that will not with a very little payne be cured as he ought, shall be els where eternally tormented, as he descrueth.

CHAP. XIII.

SONNE, man consisteth of two parts, the owne called the inferiour and sensuall, appertayning to the body: the other the superiour and reasonable, appertayning to the soule. When he was created in the terrestriall Paradise, as long as he continued in his state of innocency, he enioyed great peace also, because the inferiour part was in perfect subiection, and obeyed the superiour part, neither was it so hardy as to resist. But after that man did by sinne make resistance against his Creatours will, he fell from that happy and peacable state of innocency, & the inferiour part began to rebell against the superiour, that is Reason: and hauing also, out of a pride, a will to vsurpe her authority, it fell also shamefully; for that reiecting the counsaile of Reason, it began to attend wholly to pleasures. Hence arose the warre, that is now made between the Sense, and Reason. By this, man became spoyled of his former peace and tranquility & for that cause he was driven to gard himselfe with the help of vertues for the bringing of sensuality vnder the subiection of Reason. And amongst these vertues Chastity

stity hath a principall place, which if it once find an entrance into Reasons kingdom, and into the superiour part of the soule, like a prudent and wise Lady she commandeth the sensuall part to hold it selfe within it owne bounds, and to yeald sovereignty to reason. Hence it is, that the first excellency of Chastity is to restore man, as much as may be, into his former state and possession of innocency wherein he was created, and to honour him with that ornament of purity, which he did weare before in the terrestriall Paradise.

2. Chastity is also called an Angelicall vertue, because it maketh man like vnto an Angell, while it causeth him to lead an Angels life. For though man of his own nature be in the midst between Angels & beasts, for that the conditions of both haue place in him; though he be superiour to these, & inferiour to those, yet is he somtymes beast-like, sometimes againe Angel-like. Beast-like, when the sensuality in the encounter with the superiour part, goeth away with victory, and hath a commaunding hand ouer Reason, and causeth a man to plunge himself so deep in the boggs of terrene pleasures, as he maketh himselfe vncapable of the heauenly, & as a brute beast, reciueth no

taft of spirituall matter at all. But when Chastity is once got into the kingdome of the mind, the warre commeth to a far different conclusion. For Chastity in the first place layeth hand vpon sensuality, imprisoneth her, and setteth Reason in her owne place and authority of gouernment and commaund. Next it prouideth that the spirit hold the flesh vnder, and in subiection, and this is to be Angell-like. And though a man be agreeably to his nature fast tyed to his flesh, and whiles he is in this banishment, trauayleth vp and downe in flesh, yet because through benefite of Chastity he liueth not according to the flesh, he is said to lead an Angells life. And he that on earth liueth as an Angell, shall in heauen shine also as the Angells do.

3. Againe, Chastity raiseth a man vp to the performing of great and wonderfull thinges: contrariwise the intemperance of the flesh abuseth him to abiect & most contemptible things. Experience teacheth, that such as pursue the fleshes pleasures, do not aspire to the effecting of noble and heroicall matters, and more then that, whiles they see themselves fast tyed and caught in the fleshs snares, they drowne themselves ouer head and cares in the puddle of lusts. This yice
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also so culleth mans wit, as it doth not only lay a bar and impediment to his progresse and profiting in discipline and arts, but also bringeth in a forgetfullnes of those thinges that were learned before. On the contrary side, Chastity as it is an Angelicall and celestially vertue, so doth it rayle a man to the execution of generous and most noble workes.

4. The founders of Religions, if they had not lead chaste liues, had neuer gone about so great, and hard matters, as the foundations of new Religions be: neither could the Apostles, when they preached the Gospell, haue moued the world, or haue done other great matters, which they did, if they had been cumbred with wiues & children. Those therefore who imbrace purity both of mind and body, be more apt to receaue the cleare light of my grace, to contemplate matters of heauen, the mysteries of the Diuinity, the blessed Spirits, the greatnes and excellency of the eternall felicity, and of the goods prepared for the vertuous in heauen. Whence it is, that man also, though still liuing in a mortall body, if he conserue his integrity of body and mind, doth euen now in part begin to enioy the pleasures of Paradise.

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5. Neither is this the least of Chastities excellencies, that it so beautifieth and setteth forth a mans soule, as it maketh it most gratefull to myne eyes. For though all vertues adorne the soule, and euery one giue it a particuler ornament, yet Chastity, because it conserueth it from all stayne of the flesh, maketh it most pure and most beautifull: as contrarywise the vice of the flesh maketh it so fowle and vgly, as though it be prouided of all other moral vertues, yet may it hardly be endured. The externall beauty of times is an occasion of the soules perdition: but Chastity, which is the soules beauty, besides that, that it is most acceptable to God, procureth both the soules and bodyes good together.

6. Finally Religious Chastity, though it be of it selfe noble & excellent, receyueth yet greater splendour and perfection from many other thinges. For first it is greatly ennobled by Vow, by vertue wherof a Religious man hath renounced all kind of pleasures, whether the same appertayne to the body and senses, or to the mind and internall facultyes therof. Againe it boroweth no smal excellency from the very fountaine and origen thereof, which is a sincere and perfect loue of me. For a Religious man

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moued not of any necessity, or hope of commodity, nor for any other human respect is induced to forsake all pleasures of the flesh, but only for the pleasing of me. And therefore Religious Chastity is the more commendable for this, because it is endued with most perfect Charity, which is the nurse and mother thereof. No little splendour and perfection also is added vnto it by the end and scope that Religious Chastity hath proposed: and this end is nothing els, then my honour and glory, and therefore the Religious bind themselves to perpetuall Chastity, for that by it Gods service is in a wonderfull sort amplified, and so it is no meruayle, though Religious Chastity challengeth the first place amongst all the degrees of Chastity. The more excellent and perfect Chastity is, the more it communiceth to them that loue it.

7. Wherefore, Sonne, seeing Chastity is so noble & excellēt, I do not hold it inough if thou imbrace it after a meane manner, or haue an earnest desire vnto it, as to a most precious Iewell; but I could rather wish, thou wouldest also consecrate thy selfe therunto, as to a thing, that did most of al please me. And know thou, that I do aboue all things loue a pure and chaste hart, and loue it

it so affectuously, as I not only with a singular ioy repose therein, & enrich it with sundry gifts, but also nothing can be required of me, that I do not gratioſly impart vnto it. And this alone ſhould ſet euery Religious mans mind on fire to deſire this heavenly gemme, wonderfully ſhining, not only in the company of vertues on earth, but alſo in heauen amongſt the company of the bleſſed. The more tenderly thou ſhalt loue Chſtity, the more thou ſhalt be loned of God, and if thou canſt not loue it, as much as it deſerueth, at leaſt loue it in what thou art able.

How great'y conuenient it is for a Religious man to be chaſt.

CHAP. XV.

LORD, I well vnderſtand, that it is very conuenient, that he be chaſt, who attendeth to thy ſeruice, conſidering by the benefit of his Vow he is conſecrated and bound to thee, the fountaine of all purity. It is nothing agreeable, that vnder a cleane and pure head the members ſhould be filthy and fowle. But I know not how I may long defend my Chſtity, ſith I haue at home a capitall enemy, who truſting to both in-
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ward and outward helps, becometh so stout & hardy, as I almost despaire of the victory. Now thou knowest, o Lord, how sore this insolent and proud flesh persecuteth the purity of my soule. Thou art not ignorant, how many assaults it maketh night and day vpon it. And yet this doth not make me afraid. Another thing perplexeth and troubleth me much more, that is, that both the wantonesse and rebellion of the senses within, and the most cruell enemy Sathan without, do minister helps vnto it.

2. Sonne, what thou sayst is most true, but thou must not be dismayd for it: for the greater that the enemies boldnes & power is, the more glorious wil the victory & crown be that followeth after. Neither shalt thou want my help, only play thou the man, and vse all thy forces for the maintayning of Chastity, and no enemy from within or without shall get the victory from thee. And seeing thou acknowledgest, and confessest also, that it is conuenient, that my Religious seruants be chaste, as I their Lord am; know thou that I was euer so hartly a louer of purity, as myne aduersaries, who calumniated me in very many things, durst not accuse or condemne me of the very least defect against Chastity. And that the Religious

gious ought to be such their state exacteth, fith they make a profession to be my followers, & imitators of my life. Wherefore feing I was exceedingly affected to this vertue of Chastity, and regarded it as the guid of a spirituall life, requisite it is, that they also imbrace and take it for their Lady and Mistresse.

3. And because I make so high an esteem of purity, and am in the highest degree averted from the vice of concupiscence, why wouldst thou haue me to enterrayne a dishonest seruant within my house? or that I should endure him in the same? How should I suffer, that any seruice should be done me by him, whom I know to haue an vncleane mind? The seruant that accommodateth not himselfe to his Lord and Maister, or neglecteth to procure his loue and good will, either will not be long stable in his office, or if he continue in it, will make very little profit therby, and will put himselfe in danger of being thrust out, to his owne great hurt, and no little shame and confusion. Do I require at my seruants hands any thing vnfitting, vnseemly, or impossible? I require purity, which is a principall vertue: I require of him, that he suffer not himselfe to be supplated or overcome by his sensuality,
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and this is honorable. I exact of him, that which he hath promised, and that is to liue chastly, which is a point of iustice.

4. Further, I long to know, wherein consisteth to leave and forsake the world? Not that a man giue ouer to liue vnder heauen, or to dwell on earth, or to draw this ayre (for all these be necessary, and as common to secular men, as to Religious) but that he lead a life far different from that of the world. Amongst the euills of this world one is, to neglect spirituall things, & to seeke after the pleasures, & contentments of the flesh. The Religious therfore, who forsake the world in sincerity, must lead a life in conuersation and manners contrary to the world, by mortification of their desires, by a renunciatio of the senses delights, and by a contemning of whatsoever this blind world loueth and imbraceth: and in brief, their conuersation must be in heauen. But nothing so much contradicteth the desire of heauenly things, & nothing is so prejudiciall to the tast of spirituall matters, as is incontineney: whiles on the contrary, nothing promoteth a Religious man so to the leading of an heauenly life, as doth Chastity alone, which as it conserueth the mind pure so doth it raise a Religious man to the contemplation

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templation of heauenly thinges. The further thy life is off from that of the world, the more secure shall thy Chastity be, and vpon earth will sooner further thee to the leading of a celestiall life.

5. Sonne, dost thou conceiue the cause why any vnchast man, euen amongst the heathens, neuer came to so great impudency as he durst publicly in the presence of others commit any lasciuious act, but rather cōfounded in himselfe, would seek about for corners, and hidden places, wherby to hide and couer his fault. Naturall light hath taught him, that all acts of vncleane be vnworthy the sight of men, and therefore he seeketh corners, and hideth himselfe, fearing least he should attempt, or do any thing against his honour, and the rule of reason. Wherefore if an act repugnant to Chastity be vnworthy an heathen, how much more vnworthy a Christian, in whose law the vice of concupiscence is condemned. And much more vnworthy be they in a Religious man, who hath professed Chastity, and bound himselfe by solemnity of Vow also to liue chastly. And though a man in committing any foule act of carnality auoydeth to be seen of men, yet shall he not escape the sight of God, who is euery where, and beholdeth

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holdeth all thinges .

6. That one man subiecteth himselfe for loue of me to another, his inferiour, depending vpon his will, and obeying him in all things, is both honorable, and very meritorious, for that whatsoeuer is done for the loue of me, is done to me, and it is my part to remunerate & reward it . But that a man placed in a high estate, should to his owne great hurt and reproach subiect himselfe to a vile thing, and inferiour to himselfe, is repugnant to my will, who am Lord also of man . Go too now, tell me my Son, whether it be more conuenient, that a Religious man subiect himselfe to the sensuall part, namely to the hand-mayd, or to permit, that reason, as the mistresse commaund him . And if this be more conuenient, & not that, it is more meete also, that a Religious man make an esteeme of Chastity, by help whereof he may bring the hand-mayd *Concupiscence* in subiection to *Reason*, her lawful mistresse . He that putteth himselfe vnder him that he should not, is also handled in the manner that he would not .

7. Sonne, he that hath enemyes, hath need of a guard for his person . And as he, who hath them within and without his hold, is in the greater danger, so needeth he

greater help, especially if both sorts of enemies, both within and without, shall conspire together. But what should he deserue, who by putting his enemies into prison, had deliuered his castle from danger? He should deserue, no doubt, to obtayne of the Governour of the Castle whatsoeuer he would.

8. Sonne, thou hast one domestical & troublefom enemy within, namely thy flesh, and two without, to witt, the world and the diuell, who are ioyned in a confederacy together, and seeke to invade & breake in to the forresse of thy hart. How much then may Chastity deserue at thy hands, which, by the ouerthrow of thy flesh, and beastly desires, thy domestical enemies, exempteth thee out of so great a danger? Iudge thou, how great esteeme thou oughtst to make of Chastity, which is both thy faythfull friend, and a capitall enemy of thyne enemies? Consider if it were not thy part to fauour her, sith she so greatly fauoureth and helperh thee. Thou must needs be ingrate, if thou torbeare to choose her for the gouernesse of thy hart, that she may conserue it free from all impurity, and defend it from the guiles of crafty concupiscence. Who acknowledgeth not his owne misery
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and danger, is nothing solicitous about
any to help him.

*How profitable and necessary it is, that a
Religious man be chaste.*

CHAP. XVII.

IN euery white and pure thing, the very
least stayne appeareth, and the whiter it
is, the more plainly doth the spot discover
it selfe. Euen so in a Religious life, be-
cause it is most white & pure, the very least
defect of purity is objected to the eyes, and
offendeth them that see it. Secular men
haue Religious for certaine spectacles of
vertues: but a looking-glasse displeaseth,
vntles it be all cleare and shining. In other
vertues a light default neuer offendeth so
much, or doth so great hurt in a Religious
man, as doth a defect in Chastity. A Reli-
gious man doth not easily incur the losse
of his good name, if either he transgresse
somewhat against meeknes, because he is by
nature cholerike, or be not very franke and
liberall, or seeketh after a little vayne glory,
or be not perfectly humble, or fall into some
like defect. But if he commit but some very
little matter against Chastity, he forthwith
obscureth the opinion of his good name.

For euery wise man iudgeth that a Religious man, though he be neuer so hard, and fast handed, may yet be an holy man. In like manner one by nature cholerike, or somewhat curious, may yet be pious and deuout: but when they come to Chastity, the contrary is conceyued, namely, that there cannot be any holines, where incontinency is, nor that the deuotion can be sincere, where the perturbations of mind beare sway: neither can there be spirit, where the flesh commaundeth. Besides, the defects of other vertues be easily excused; either for that they grow of a naturall complexion, as choller, or for that they proceed of a good end and intention, as is sparing and frugality: but a defect of carnall concupiscence is condemned of all, and excused of none.

2. All thinke Religious men to be as it were the Salt of the Earth, and the Light of the World, as my Scripture speaketh, and therefore they need to take paynes, that the true propertyes of salt and light may concur in them. Salt with the sharpnes drieth vp the humors, and preserueth from putrifaction, but if it be not pure, or be mixed with earth, it not only not preserueth, but also causeth putrifaction the sooner. So if a Religious man be pure, and sincere in his

words,

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words, & counsailes, he will easily conserue others, but if he be vncleane & stayned with a litle stayne of carnal desires, he will by his bad example easily marre them. Light also serueth to giue light, and to shew where the dangers and downfalls be, but if the candles weeke be either foule, or moist, it yealdeth more of smoke then of light. So a Religious man, if he haue not a pure and cleane hart, will not only not enlightē, but also obscure, and darken the way, that both himselfe, & all that do accompany him, may shamefully stumble, and so giue a greater stincke and smell, then light. He shall haue much a do to conserue & enlighten others, who neglecth to keep and giue light to himselfe.

3. Moreouer the Religious life is so tender and delicate, as not only the defect of purity, but the very least suspicion of incontinency also hurteth a Religious man much. Who would esteeme that matrone for wise, who should for help and counsailes sake go to a Religious man, suspected of incontinency? Is it not an extreme misery, that a Religious man consecrated to me, should be ill reported of? Certes, the Religious person, that should make no reckoning of his good name with his neighbour, receyuerh no good by him neither. O how grieuously

do those Religious men sinne, who do not beware of falling into the occasions of being infamed by such a vice, but perswade themselves, that it is inough, if they commit nothing that is euill by deed, whatsoeuer men say and report of them. They are not without fault, if they giue but the occasion of such obloquies and detractions: for they are bound not only to fly from the vice it selfe, but also to take away all suspicion thereof. He that hateth the Diuell, will not easily endure to see him painted.

4. It is nothing conuenient to thrust a man against reason out of his owne house, neither can it be done in conscience. Remember, Sonne, that thy hart is my Temple and my house. I haue layd the foundations of it, raised and perfected the building, and whatsoeuer is faire and precious in it, hath come from me. And that this house might be euer beautifull, & that I might still make my aboad and habitation therein, I deliuered it to the keeping of Chastity, a trusty & vigilant keeper. But if thou wouldest now thrust me against all reason out of it, thou canst not do it without most grieuous sacrilege. And if thou hast a will to driue Chastity out of the house of thy hart, that concupiscence may commaund in it, thou

mayst

mayst not do that also without a great crime. He that thrusteth out him, of whome he is holpen and honoured, will easily fall into the hands of some one, who will handle him according to his desertes.

5. Tell me, I pray thee, when thou vowedst perpetuall Chastity, what didst thou promise to God? Didst thou not promise, that thou wouldst from thenceforth make warre against all carnal pleasures both of body and mind? Didst thou not promise to perseuere chaste to thy liues end? Dost thou not therefore thinke, that thou art bound necessarily to performe thy promise, sith thou canst not look any more backe? Knowest thou not, what my Apostle sayth: Who shall violate, or defile Gods Temple, God will destroy him? And if thou for some litle carnall pleasure driuest me out of thy hart, with what right canst thou challeng of me to be receiued into the kingdom of heauen? And if for a little pleasure of the senses, by defying thy hart, thou abusest Chastity, wherefore shouldst thou exact her to bring thee to the vision of God, promised to the cleane of hart alone? Vnderstand therefore that it is no way good for thee in the very least thing to offend against Chastity, because thou hast by Vow of Chastity promised

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missed no way to preiudice her purity, neither in great matters, nor in little.

6. It is further necessary that a Religious man aspire to the perfection of Chastity for this, for that he hath made a profession of leading a spirituall life, which sith it hath not a more sworne enemy, then the concupiscence of the flesh, cannot possibly liue a spirital life, vnles the flesh be first brought in subiection to the spirit. For the Religious who is truly spirituall, must not only be stranger to the vice of the flesh, but also be auerted from all those, that haue their origin from the flesh, or haue any dealing with it at all. And therefore he must diligently, & carefully exclude and keep out all bad cogitations, & impure suggestions. In his talke he must be circumspect, that any words fall not from his mouth, that may seem against honesty. He must not cast his eyes vpon lasciuious acts, though they should be done without sinne. And these be helps for the mortification of the flesh. But I would haue thee, Sonne, to consider and obserue, that the flesh sometyms faigneth it selfe dead, when it is not, & pretendeth it selfe to be in most great subiection to the spirit. But then a wise and spirituall Religious man must be most of all vpon his gard; for it is accustomed

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yme it perswadeth the Religious man to
withdraw somewhat of his former rigour,
thit was ready to yeald most prompt ser-
vice to the spirit. But he that will not be
receiued, or beguyled by the crafty flesh,
must vse the counsaile of his spiritual father.
There is no trust to be had to a dissembling
enemy, because by his faigning he disco-
uereth himselfe.

Of the utility of Religious Chastity.

CHAP. XVII.

Sonne, when I did in my Ghospel vn-
der the name of Eunuches commend
them who do for the loue of me voluntarily
make the Vow of perpetuall Chastity (for
this is to make himselfe an Eunuch, and
to geld himself for the kingdom of heauen)
I did intend that very thing, because a man
by such a Vow, as it were with one sharpe
cut of a knife, cutteth off all power, and oc-
casions of vsing carnall pleasures. For what
is not any longer lawfull, is truly sayd to be
impossible. And hauing commended these
my chast Eunuches, I added, *He that can take,*
let him take. For I knew, that all would not
vnderstand

vnderstand the most great vtilities, that perpetual continency bringeth to the Religious. I omit to mention here, how by the benefit of it they are freed from infinite molestations and troubles, and the reproachful insolencies of the flesh, which if it get one but the least commaund, casteth headlong euen wise men into the bottomles gulfe of vices. And if the care of outward riches be troublesome for the sollicitude they bring with them, much more cumbersome is the concupiscence, which because it is homebred, woundeth more sorely, and therefore the wounds therof be the more deadly.

2. I say nothing that they be eased of many afflictions, and carking cares of governing their house, which be otherwhise so troublesome, as they bring men to desperation. It appertayneth to the maister of the family to provide for his wife, for the good bringing vp of his children, for the placing of his daughters in marriage, to take care that no necessary thing be wanting, that the seruants of both sexes do their duty. And if all in that family be good and modest and well ordred, and yet there is no want of troubles; what will there then be, if many of them be peruerse, vntoward, and vnruely? I premit, that the Religious by the bene-

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of the sayd Vow be deliuered from the
spiritions of wife and children, which are
wont otherwhiles so to torment the hus-
bands, as therby they become almost mad,
and out of their wits. Finally I forbear to
remember other infinite incommodities, &
unluckly euents, which happen vnexpec-
ted in families, and are wont wonderfully
to vex and trouble the maisters of the fami-
ly. Wo be to those Religious men, who free
from so many impediments and snares, do
not labour to the perfection of their state.

3. Religious Chastity then cutteth off
all these troubles, and vnquiet thoughts, &
causeth the Religious man, as a Cittizen of
heauen, content with his vocation, to at-
tend only to the cōtemplation of heauenly
things, and to the procuring of his owne
soules good. And how healthfull and pro-
table this is, those Religious know well,
who farre remoued from the sayd busines
of employment, do liue a single life. The
afflicted men of the world also are not igno-
rant therof, who to their great hurt, and
griefe haue a dayly experience of those trou-
bles and miseries. And if there were no-
thing els, then to thinke how to please their
wiues, how to appeare the before world,
how to content their kins-folks & friends,
this

this were a crosse heauy inough to beare long as they liue. But the chaste Religious need not to thinke vpon any other thing then how to please me. O how much more easy it is to please me, then the world, and how much sooner the Creatour is satisfied then the Creature. Whosoeuer in this liueth pleaseth God most, shall haue the highest place of honour in his court of Heauen.

4. Againe the secular man, tyed in marriage, hath no power of his owne body, but the wife hath a command ouer it. For so writteth my Apostle, & it is most true, that the law of Matrimony requireth it. And is not this a kind of seruitude to be at the command of a Woman? and seing it is not for one year, nor for ten, but for the whole life, is it not a continuall seruitude? It is indeed to be confessed, that the tribulation is the lesse, if the man happen vpon a verrueous wife, and yet it loseth not the name of seruitude. But when he lighteth vpon a vayne impudēt, quareling, or scolding wife, what is it but an hell? How great is the husbands misery? What boundslaue is worse handled then he? But a chaste Religious man hath to do with Chastity, that is, a benigne vertue, he hath to deale with me, who though his Lord and Maister, yet a most louing & kind

Father

deare Father. And to serue me by Vow of Chastity, is nothing els, then to heap vp store of merits, and to increase them. Vnhappy is the man, who by his seruing others profiteth himselfe nothing: but more vnhappy is he, who sustayneth detriment also, and losse of the things he hath.

5. Moreouer, he that is forced to keep company both night & day with a cruell & enuenuimed wild beast, is in a manifest hazard of his life, either by his byting or im-
For poysoning him. But if a man could be able to stop vp the beasts mouth, that he could neither bite him, nor spit out the poyson at him, he could not but profit and do himselfe good. Sonne, no wild beast is more cruell, nor more full of venime, then is our flesh, the byting & venime wherof destroyeth & killeth the soule. And seing we be forced to haue the continuall company thereof with vs, no doubt our soule must needs be in great perill, from which Chastity deliuereth it. For whiles by the band of Vow it bindeth the cōcupiscēce, which is the beasts mouth, it so prouideth that it can neither byte, nor cast forth it poyson. He is not worthy of commiseration and pittie, who suffereth himselfe to be bitten of a beast chayned and tyed vp: neither deserueth that man pardon, who

who contemneth the helpe presented vnto him.

6. When any tumult or styr ariseth in a common wealth, for the quietting thereof necessary it is, that he who first caused it, be forthwith laid hold on, for when the vulgar and common sort want their Capitaine on whome to relye, they eftsloons disperse themselves, and the tumult endeth. In a religious man, who is like a Common wealth well ordred, there is a tumult rayled, when the inferiour part of the mind stirreth and rebelleth against the superiour, and therefore for the appeasing of the stirre, and bringing of the common wealth to quiet, it must imprison the flesh, which is the Capitaine of the common people, and rayseth vp the passions against the soule, and the desires of the senses against reason. And Chastity is that, which by help of the Vowes, putteth the flesh in prison, and by well guarding and manning the hart, which is a Religious mans cattle, preserveth and maintayneth the commonwealths tranquillity and peace. And this vtility, caused by Religious Chastity, is so important, as a Religious man without it, differeth nothing from a certayne Babylonian confusion.

7. Of this there ariseth another vtility,
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nothing inferiour to the aforeſaid; that a Religious man, becauſe by the help of Chaſtity he hath procured peace and quiet of mind within, may alſo go away with victory ouer them that be enemyes without. The generall of an army, who hath his ſouldiers, though few, agreeing and conſpiring together, and obedient vnto him, hath not any difficulty in obtaining the victory. So the Religious, if he can keep the inferiour or ſenſuall facultyes ſubiect and obedient to the ſuperiour, may ſecurely ioyne battaile with the aduerſe part, and go away with an vndoubted victory. A vnited ſmal number in an army is farre better then a diſagreeing or iarring multitude, and therefore the Generall of the warre muſt make much of thoſe in the army, who be the authors of peace and concord in others: Euen ſo in the ſpiritual warre, the Religious who is as the Generall, muſt make an high eſteeme of Chaſtity, which promoteth and furthereth the peace of the ſouldiers. He is eaſily overcome, who before he commeth to encounter with the enemy, hath not drawn his ſouldiers into a firme peace amongſt themſelues.

Of the dangers of loosing Chastity.

CHAP. XVIII.

SONNE, thou knowest well, that Chastity is a gemme of great price & worth, no lesse pleasing to me, then profitable to thy self. But thou must further know, there be many theeves and enemyes, who seeke to spoyle thee of it, or at least to destroy and marre it, out of malice they beare vnto thee, & therfore thou needest to be very vigilant, and well armed against their assaults. Neither must thou be ouer confident, though thy flesh be tyed by Vow, sith it is so cratty & insolent, that though it cannot breake out by breaking the bands, which it euer labourereth to do, yet after her old manner, though she be neuer so fast bound, she maketh stirres & tumults, hoping therby either to worke her owne liberty, or to giue some deadly wound to Chastity her enemy. Neither be thou so confident, that Chastity, because it hath for a tyme seated it selfe within the castle of thy hart, is therfore secure, & out of danger: for most strong fortifications many times are surprised & taken on a suddane, & ouermuch security it commonly hurtfull, because it is the mother of slouth, & carelesnes.

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2. The first danger imminent is of treason: for seeing Chastity is round beset with enemyes, both domesticall and forayne, it may easily be betrayed, and therefore the religious must stand vpon his guard, that his domesticall enemy, namely his flesh, be not seconded, and backed by enemyes from abroad. Sonne, if thou wilt be intertayned delicately with meate and drinke, and sleep at thy pleasure, and yet thinke thou mayst preserue thy Chastity vntayned against the assaults of the flesh, thou art greatly deceyued, because by that thou effectest nothing but this, that thou giuest weapons & armes vnto the flesh. And what meruaile, if it after rise against the spirit? What meruaile, if it go about to break the bands of Vow, and to thrust Chastity out of her possession, though she hath long stayed therein? Wilt thou haue thy flesh not to be wanton? Chastize it then with hard dyet. Wilt thou not haue Chastity betrayed, nor to be thrust out of her house? Put a guard vpon her: fasting and watching be two good keepers, who do not only keep and defend her, but do also spoyle the enemyes of their weapons, that they may not rise against her. The more thou flatter, and fauour thy flesh, the more strongly it fortifieth it selfe against Chastity.

3. Lord, for the sustayning of life, and for the seruing of thy diuine maiesty, a man needeth meate, drinke, and sleep, and if the flesh waxe thereby proud, and rise against the spirit, or Chastity, it is not our fault, because it is not the end proposed by vs. Sonne, I find no fault with those things that be necessary for the intertayning of life, and the sustayning of trauayles and labour for my sake (for whatsoever is directed to my seruice and glory, is blessed, good, and laudable) but I only improue what is superfluous. Meate and drinke not necessary, but immoderate, setteth the fleshes concupiscence on fire, and bringeth the Chastity in daunger. Who eateth ouer much, serueth not me, but his owne appetite and desire. Those please me, who cate that they may liue and serue me, and contrarywise they discontent me much, who seem to liue that they may cate. Many of my most deare seruants, did not so, to whome it was a payne to cate, and a loathing to sleep: and in these men Chastity raigned, as in her owne kingdom. Moderate diet profiteth body and soule, & contrarywise excessie hurterh them both.

4. Another danger groweth from the senses, which because they be the gates of

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the hart, where Chastity resideth, need a strong guard, because both good and euill make their entrance thereby into the hart. He that hath not a diligent and carefull eye to the keeping of the gate of his house, shall oftentimes find something missing, & taken away, or within it shall find something that he would not, and would wish away. For doores are made, that they may be shut and opened: they are shut against men vnknown and that may do hurt: they are opened to men knowne, & to friends who may help. A Religious man must not permit any one to enter into his house of Chastity, without examining him first.

5. So do they in Frontiere places and townes of kingdomes, and theremost of all where there is feare, or suspition of treason from enemyes, where not only be examined those that desire to enter, but their packes also, letters, and weapons are viewed and searched that nothing hurtfull be brought into the Citty. And this vigilancy is not discommended, but commended. And yet this care and diligence oftentimes doth not remedy all inconueniences, sith experience teacheth that, notwithstanding the watching and warding at the gates, there be many treasons committed. Wherefore then

should not a Religious man stand vpon his guard in keeping the gates of his hart, where in he hath all his good, and whereon dependeth both his saluation, and his eternal damnation. Who will say, that the vigilancy and diligence is ouermuch, where there be so many enemyes? Who keepeth the gates of his senses negligently, shall find death entred into his houle.

6. Moreouer to conuerle and keep company with lasciuious persons, or such as be not chaste, is to cast ones selfe into a manifest daunger of loosing his Chastity. For as experience hath taught, more chaste persons haue been by the lasciuious drawn to intemperance, then haue lasciuious been by the chaste induced to Chastity. For such is the nature of the condition of man, as after the losse of his integrity of life, he is more prone to euill then to good, and as the sick, rather desizeth those things that delight the tast, then profit the health. But if the conuersation with such kind of men arise peraduenture of an inordinate affection, there is greater danger imminent. For if the only company with vchaste persons be dangerous, of how great daunger will it be to keep company with carnall affection? He that is prouoked by the object from with-

out,

out, and put forwards by an affection from within soon falleth, though he be spiritual. And therefore my seruants, who were in loue with Chastity, so soone as they perceaued themselues to be by any inordinate affection drawn to dangerous company, forthwith left it, as an enemy to Chastity. For he easily learneth to halt, who often conuerse, and keepeth company with the halting.

7. The same is the danger of reading of wanton bookes, which be repugnant to Chastity. I know not, how that Religious man can be excused, who keepeth such an infection within his chamber. Poyson, though it be put into good and wholesome meates, ceaseth not to be poyson, or to kill them who take it: euen so vnchast matters, whether expressed in pictures, or interlaced in the bookes of sound doctrine, doe neither forgoe the name of dishonesty, nor cease to hurt the beholders, readers, or hearers. And if vnto secular men the reading of such bookes cannot in good conscience be permitted, how should it be permitted to the Religious, that professe Chastity? What is read in books, is reflected vpon in hart, & what is ruminated in mind, is easily retayned in the affection.

8. There is another enemy of Chastity the more to be feared, the more hardly he is knowne and discouered, and that is an ouer great security and confidence of a Religious man in his owne continency. For this hath drawn many into their ruine: and what maruell, sith it is prides daughter. Who hath a will to be chaste, and shuneth not the dangers, presumeth ouermuch of himselfe. My lowly and chaste seruants did not so, but diffident of their owne forces, they ranne diligently from whatsoeuer might set the desires and appetites of the flesh on fire. And though security maketh not a Religious man rash, and ouer bold, yet it maketh him negligent and carelesse, and both the one & the other doth endāger Chastity not a litle. Who trusteth ouermuch to himselfe, easily exposeth himselfe to perills, and therefore is often beguiled, & sustayneth a greater losse then he would haue thought.

Of the meanes to conserue Chastity.

CHAP. XIX.

SOME, in the battayles that are fought amongst men, it profiteth sometymes to come before the face of the enemy, & sometymes to skirmish with him, for as much

as bolūnes is wont to abate the enemyes courage, and to cause him to fly. But in this spirituall warre, where we are to fight with the flesh, the victory is obtayned rather by flying from the enemy, then encountring him. For he, who seeketh to set vpon his enemy, putteth himself into very great danger to be ouercome, and ordinarily his losse is greater then is the gaine. Neither ought this to seeme strang vnto thee, for that in the conflicts of this world, whiles an assault is made vpon the enemy, the souldiers courage is set the more on fire, and the enemyes hearts begin to faint; but in this encounter the contrary happeneth. For the more manfully thou shalt resist thy concupiscence, the more it rageth, and the fire of it increaseth; in so much as it either striketh and woundeth, or pricketh, and therefore more wisdom is shewed in flying from it.

2. Thou art not wiser then *Salomon*, who becaule he flying not from the occasions, fell so shamefully, as he did. *S. Iohn Baptist* my precursour, though he were sanctified in his mothers wombe, did notwithstanding for the auoyding of all occasions of sinning, hide himselfe being but a child in the desert: and wilt thou, who neither art sanctified, nor so vertuous, thrust thy self

into the midst of occasions, & make head
against thyne enemy to fight with him.
This is a manifest signe, that either thou hast
not got any knowledge of thy selfe, or thou
makest little reckoning of Chastities gift.

3. Another meanes is, most speedily to
repell & shake off the foule suggestions that
the Diuell presenteth to the mind. For they
be like little plants, which if they be not
fortwith pulled vp out of the soules garden,
do soone take roote, grow, & bring forth
thornes, that pricke the mind, and choake
vp Chastity. A Religious man, who pur-
teth not away vncleane thoughts after he
hath once perceiued them, doth declare his
liking of them: and if they please him, how
can he lose the purity of mind, that is stay-
ned with such manner of thoughts? Again
if foule cogitations hurt, as soone as euer
they put out their heads, how much more
will they hurt, if they shall by delay gather
more strength? Little coales, though they
lye but a little tyme vnder cloaths, do not-
withstanding both cause a bad smell, and
burne the cloath. If the Religious would
consider, from how great incommodities
and troubles they should free themselues, if
they should in the very beginning shake off
the foule cogitations of carnality, there is

none

none, who would suffer the little ones of Babylon to grow to any bignes within his hart, but would instantly dash them against the rocke. Our cowardize, and dastardy in putting away impure cogitations, maketh the Diuell diligent and bold in tempting vs against Chastity.

4. It helpeth also to chastities conseruation, to be otherwhiles blind, deafe, and mute. For if it be true, that it is not lawfull to see; or heare what it is not lawfull to de- fire, what cause hath a Religious man, when he goeth abroad, to cast his eyes vpon the countenances of all that he meeteth? Let him leaue that office to the Painters, who for the true exprelling of mens coun- tenances, must needs haue their eyes fixed vpon them. A good and chaste Religious man rather taketh vpon him to contem- plate the countenaunces, such as they shall one day be after death, then as they be in life. For what profiteth it to behold those things that be nothing good; but be rather impedi- ments to the meditatio of heavenly things? The lesse thou shalt see, or heare of thinges of this world, the more securely shalt thou enioy the comfort of Chastity.

5. Another soueraigne help for the conseruing of the minds purity, is the a- uoyding

uoyding of ydlenes, which as it is most comberlome to Chastity, so it is most contenting to the flesh, which is accustomed to grow wanton by ydlenes, & consequently to become more fierce against Chastity every day then other. To liue idly, is to set open the doore for theeuers and robbers to enter into the house. For he, who careth not for the loosing of his own goods, doth nothing but giue vnto theeuers opportunity of robbing him of what he hath. Who is well busied, is not wont to lend his hearing to any one, but in necessary matters: but one that is ydle, and giuen to his recreations, is ready to heare all, whether the talke be secular, or spirituall: if it be spirituall, it instantly passeth away, if it be secular and carnall, it taketh increase by ydlenes.

6. Consider thou now, whether it be conuenient that thou be idle, who art come to Religion for no other end, then to suffer many labours, and much paynes for Christ. And whether it be meet by ydlenes and ease to patronize the flesh against Chastity, when as thou hast by Vow promised thy Chastity to God? Some cast the fault vpon the Diuell, that they be ouer sore troubled with impure cogitations, who are rather culpable theselues. For he by tempting

seeketh

seeketh to put occupations vpon them who haue none, that they may satisfy their duty; and therefore if they should be euer busy in some pious action or other, the Diuell should not haue any place, and the Chastity might be the more safely kept. To haue a desire and will to be ydle, and not to haue a will to be tempted, cannot agree together, for that nothing inuitheth the Diuell sooner to throw his darts of tentations, then ydleness, and ease.

7. My seruants, who now raigne happily in heauen, for the mantayning of their Chastity on earth, exercised themselues in two vertues aboue the rest, to witt, humility and pennance. Humility of hatt, like a pious mother, seeketh most carefully to conserue Chastity, as her deare daughter. For those my seruants vnderstood very well, that it was a very hard matter for a proud, and arrogant person to keep & preserue his flower of Chastity. Againe Pennance is the conseruer of Chastity as touching the body, and therfore they were much giuen to the mortifying of their flesh, some to fastings, others to disciplines, watchings, and to other afflictions of that kind, knowing that they were the preseruatiue antidots of purity. And when these remedies will not help,
let

let them vse more effectually. Whence it is that some for the extinguishing, and putting out the heat of lust did cast themselves into most freezing cold waters, some into snow, others cast themselves naked into nettles & thornes, some did burne off their owne fingers. By which acts they declared themselves to be great enemyes to their flesh and faythfull conseruers of their Chastity. The body cannot be brought vnder subjection, but by vsing some seuerity and rigour to it: and a body vntamed and veruly cannot away with Chastity, and in conclusion either cleane abandoneth it, or preserueth it not long vntayned.

Of the Vow of Obedience, and wherein Religious Obedience consisteth.

CHAP. XX.

LORD, though I desire much to imbrace this course of life without falling and erring, yet I fall & erre so often, as I am athamed of it. In somethinges I make ouermuch halt, in others I am ouer slow, neither can I well resolue, what I should do. I doe further attempt many thinges, but yet with an vnfortunate cuent.

2. Sonne, in this life none is sufficient

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of himselfe, that he may liue as he ought, because none hath euer come to that perfection of knowledge, that he should be free from all errour. Thou knowest not, what will be to morrow: the hearts of men be to thee vnknown and inscrutable, neither dost thou well know thy selfe. How then canst thou without falling or errour either conuerse with others, or gouerne thy selfe? Who trauaileth by night and in darknes, though he fal not, yet he stumblēth at least or goeth out of his way. And though thou mayst be provided of knowledg & of light, yet where be thy forces, and helps necessary for the ouercoming of the difficultyes that often occur? Forso violent be the perturbations of the mind, as they carry away euen those who seeme to haue gone beyonnd the condition of mans nature, neither be the forces of nature of ability to keep them in. And if in the naturall life, wherein the light of reason shineth to all, there be so many errors, how many will there be in the spirituall, wherein there is both less light & vnderstanding, and greater difficultyes do occurre?

2. So it is Lord, but shall we continue in this darknes, depriued of all helps and remedies? Sonne, in this necessity the vertue of Obedience is able to giue thee both

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an help and a remedy, of which it is a common saying: Suffer thy selfe to be ruled. He that taketh a iourney, and cannot well see his way before him, standeth in need of a guide, & of one well sighted, & that knoweth the way. The vertue of Obedience is that which deliuereth a Religious man into my hands, that I may guide and direct him. And seeing I am skillfull of the way, and know the windings, turnings, and difficulties, let euery Religious man be secure and assured, that I will faithfully direct him in the way that shall bring him to life everlasting, so he suffer himselfe to be for his owne part gouerned, and brought to his iourneys end.

4. All Religious, whiles they renounce the world, begin to follow me, but many thinking themselves not to stand in any need of my conduct, leaue and forsake me, not to any hurt of myne, but their own. It is not inough to haue begun. If there should be no difficulties, but in the entrance into the way, they might haue some cause of excusing themselves, but seeing the same to be dangerous all the way, and in the whole course of their iourney, they must not leaue their conductour. He, that not knowing the way contemneth a guide, manifesteth

that

that he maketh little reckoning of his going astray.

5. In the world I administer, and gouerneall: by me Kinges raigne, and Princes commaund: by me the Law-makers determine what is iust, and the Iudges do iustice. And where I haue commanded obedience to be giuen to temporal Lords, whoeuer resisteth their commaund, resisteth me, and my ordination. The same is done in the ship of Religion, wherein I am the chief Maister, and Pilot: I direct it, and bring it safe into the harbour: I assigne euery marryner his office and charge, and to whome they and others must be obedient. And whereas I am in euery one of them, and determine what euery subiect is to do, to obey them is nothing els, then to obey me, and to contemne them, is to contemne me.

6. All Religious be indeed in a ship, but all haue not good speed and successe in their nauigation. He that suffereth himselfe to be gouerned, sayleth on without danger, and hath not any cause to be troubled or afraid, and therefore, as the common saying is, goeth his iourney sleeping. But he, who suffereth not himselfe willingly to be gouerned, stayeth not within the ship, one
Q while

while grieued that he entred into the ship,
 an otherwhile wishing to leape a shoare,
 and out of a discontent and pusillanimity of
 mind he taketh no pleasure of any thing at
 all. And whence cometh this? because his
 desire is, that the ship should be directed, as
 himselfe liketh best. And this is to haue a
 will to gouerne, and not to be gouerned.
 Woe to that Religion which accomodateth
 it selfe to the propension, and will of every
 subiect. Who passeth in a ship from one
 place to another, must accommodate him-
 selfe thereto, and not contrary wise. It were
 no good traauayling, neither would the
 ship euer get into the haue, if the naviga-
 tion should be directed as every one listeth.
 That Religious man cannot liue in peace,
 who refuseth to do the will & command
 of another.

7. Doeſt thou long to know what
 Obedience is? It is nothing els, then a
 Burying. Wilt thou vnderstand, wherein
 it consisteth to obey? It consisteth in the
 buryall of the owne will. O happy is that
 Religious person, who can truely say, and
 affirme: Now I haue buried myne owne
 will, and vnwillingnes: Now haue I satis-
 fied the liberty of myne owne will, because
 he hath cast off whatſoeuer might haue
 hindred

hindred his entrance into heaven. None can take vp his crosse and follow me, vnles he shall first haue buried his owne will, and denyed himselfe. A Religious man, retayning his owne will, and doing as he list, is not dead to the world, and therefore appertayneth not to Religion, which is but one, and ought to be gouerned by one will, namely of the Superiour, and all the rest of the wills of the subiects must be buried: if they be not, as a body, that lyeth vnburied, they will yield forth an intolerable bad sent.

8. Tell me, I pray thee, my Sonne, if a man should without any cause, induced by his own will and pleasure alone, take vp a body, that had beene some monethes ago buried, would it not strike an exceeding great horroure into all that should see it, & cause them to laugh at his folly, & madnes? And what other thing is it, not to obey the Constitutions of the Order, or the Superiours commaund, then to take vp againe thyne owne will, and nill, that were before buried, both which bodyes thou buriedst at thy entring into Religion, with a firme purpose neuer to vnbury them, or to take them out of the ground againe? Thinkest thou to be excused before me, while thou

now callest them, I can, and I cannot? That I cannot, which thou hast sayd to thy Superiour, thou didst not say to me. I know, what euery one is able to do, or not able. I see also what a Religious man hath in his mouth, and what he carryeth in his hart. And I know againe, when not to be able, is not to haue a will for the shunning of some incommodity, or paynes taking. And though the Superiour accepteth of his subiects false excuse, neither examineth, whether he be truly able to do the thing, or no, that is commaunded, yet he hath no cause to be therefore glad. For the whole matter consisteth not in that alone, it will at some other time be examined at my tribunal, where the last sentence shall be pronounced, that will admit no hope of any future appeale. For men in censuring and distinguishing the truth of the thing, may be deceiued, but God cannot, who hath a perfect knowledge of all things, both within, and without.

How acceptable to God the Obedience of a Religious man is.

CHAP. XXI.

Sonne, thou canst not be ignorant, what was the end of thy first father Adam

and

and of his disobedience, namely, that not only himselfe was exiled and banished out of the terrestriall Paradise, but he was further together with his whole posterity made thrall & subiect to malediction. The labours on earth, the sweating in procuring bread to eat, the paynes of women trauayling with child, and all other miseries, wherewith man kind is afflicted, be the punishments and maledictions of disobedience, which because it is the daughter of Pride, can yeald forth no other fruite, then it doth. Thou knowest also what followed of the Obedience of *Abraham*, that not only himselfe, and all his family, but all the nations of the world also be blessed in his seed, of which was to be borne one, who by his obedience should set open the gates of heauen, that were by disobedience shut vp before: in so much as it may be truly sayd, that all celestiaall gifts, and all graces & vertues be the effects, and benedictions of Obedience.

2. Againe, if Obedience, accompayned with my expresse commaundment, which seemeth in a manner to force man to do what I commaund, be so gratefull and pleasing to me, as I abundantly reward it; how much more acceptable ought Religious Obedience

Obedience to be, in regard whereof a man of himselfe moued not by the cōmaund of any, but for the sincere loue of God, though the contrary propension of his nature repugneth, bindeth himselfe to performe my cōsailles? And where I know right well, that man is borne to high matters, and is propense to designe & vndergo heroical actions, yet when I see him for loue of me to abase himselfe, according to the iudgment of the world, to vile and contemptible functions (though in my sight they be honorable and excellent) when againe I see him not to seek glory and applause of men, but rather the contempt of himselfe: when I see, that he spoyleth himselfe of his owne will, which is the fountaine and beginning of all generous workes, by which a man may merit greatest honours before the world: & when I see, that to please me, he subiecteth himselfe to another man, his equall by nature, and oftentimes in Religion also to them, ouer whome he had authority and a cōmaund in the world; how, I say, can it possibly be, that I should not be most inwardly affected to the Obedient? And that such Obedience should not be most pleasing to me, that exciteth the Religious to do so great matters for the loue of me? How should

should I not raise them to greatest dignities, who that they might obey for loue of me, abased themselues so farre, euen against the inclination of nature? He can neuer receiue any losse, who doth much for God.

3. Obedience also pleaseth me, because it maketh the subiects tractable, prompt, and ready at every beck of the Superiour: and nothing comforteth and helpeth the Superiours so much, as to haue tractable subiects. O how do I like that Religious man, who doth with ioy and alacrity go about the doing of wharsoeuer his Superiour shall haue commaunded him, & if he should be againe by his Superiour willed to cease from the worke he had begon, he leaueth it as gladly, and executeth as readily any new worke, that shall be commaunded him. On the contrary nothing troubleth, and afflicteth the Superiour more, and causeth him more to groane vnder the weight of his gouernment & office, then to haue subiects stubborne, slacke, & hard to obey. An vtractable beast doth not easily suffer burdens to be layd vpon his backe, and after they haue byn with much payne layd vpon him, he either throweth them downe, or carryeth them with so ill a will, as a great care must be vsed, least he cast them downe at length.

length. A Superiour, that hath hard, forward and stubborne subiects, cannot be confident in them, and therefore if any thing though neuer so little, be to be commaunded them; there needeth more circumspection, then if a man were to deale with an vn-ruly beast.

4. Hence it is, that where the subiect should other wise respect, reuerence & feare his Superiour, through the default of disobedience the quite contrary is done, that is, the Superiour feareth the subiect, whome, least he should giue him an occasion of lea-ving his order, with the offence & scandall of others, he leaueth to his owne will, nei-ther commaunding him any thing, nor re- prouing him. O misery to be lamented! In the world he liued as he listed, not at an- others charge, but at his own: but in Reli- gion he hath a will to liue at his owne plea- sure, and with my cost, and my bloud, which as it cannot be done without iniu- stice, so neither can it go vn Timer. Where- fore should I not hate disobedience, which is so iniurious to Religion? Why should not the disobedient displease me, who be the ruine of their Religion? This is not the state of the obedient. For the Superiour liueth with the obediēt securely, without distrust, without

without ceremonyes, he is confident in the, and if he commaund the any thing, though very hard, they most readily do it. He obeyeth without difficulty, who imbraceth all commaunds without any excule: but he, who forced, yealdeth to the Superiours commaundment, either doth it not at all, or doth it ill. He indeed retayneth the rynd, that is, the externall act of his labour, but he looseth the kernell, that is, the fruit of the merit of obedience.

5. Morcouer I adde, that Religious Obedience pleaseth me also for this, that it comprehendeth many other vertues, in it selfe, and exerciseth their actions. For when the Religious mā for obedience sake subiecteth himselfe to others his equalls, or inferiours, he exerciseth the vertue of Humility. If the Superiours commaundement that he doth be hard, he exerciseth the vertue of Fortitude, because he ouercometh the difficulty. If it be repugnant to the sense, or to his owne nature, he exerciseth Patience, because he exerciseth what he is auerted from. If he obey for loue of me, he exerciseth Charity: & so Obedience maketh the Religious mā like vnto me, because my obedience had the company of these vertues. And seeing similitude is the cause of loue and beneuolence,

lence; it manifestly followeth, that all obedient persons be most inwardly conioyned with me: and the more vertues go in company with obedience, the more doth the obedience merit.

6. Sonne, the gift is the more accepted to him, to whom it is given: the more noble the thing is, in like manner it is the more pleasing. when excluding all the vtility of the giuer, it is only an argument and testimony of the giuers inward beneuolence & good will. Wherefore seeing Obedience is the gift of a mans liberty, then which a religious man hath nothing more noble, or more excellent; it cannot but be to me most deare, and so much the more, for that to the offering of this gift he was not moued vpon any human respect, nor for the vanity of the world, but for the only loue of me. Though this also maketh the giuer acceptable to me, that for such a gift bestowed vpon me, he remaineth not poore or imperfect, for that the more a man giueth to God, the richer, and the perfecter he becometh.

7. Sonne, Religion is a deare and beloued vineyard to me, and the rules & constitutions of it be the branches of the vine, and as it were trees planted therein by me, not without my paine. The worke-men be those,

those, whom I call out of the world, & do
furnish with sundry tooles, and talents for
the good husbanding of my vineyard. The
reaper of it is Obedience, which appointeth
into every worke-man what he is to do.
All do indeed enter into the vineyard, but
all be not profitable vnto it. The Religious
who take paynes in husbanding the trees
and vines, that is, obey my lawes and ordi-
nations, be most pleasing vnto me, and I
haue appointed them a singular hire, be-
cause they on their part do maintaine and
defend Religion. But the disobedient, who
spoyl my vineyard, cannot haue a mery or
pleasing looke from me. For what is it els
to forgoe and transgresse the rule, but to
cut off some vine, or to transplant it to some
other place? And what is this, but to dis-
solue and ouerthrow Religion? Wherefore
as much as disobedience displeaseth me,
which ouerthroweth Religion, so much
Obedience contenteth me, which setteth it
forth, preserueth, and increaseth it.

*Of the Excellency and Dignity of Reli-
gious Obedience.*

CHAP. XXII.

Sonne, hast thou at any time considered
this saying of my scripture: A man obe-
dient

dient speaketh of victories. Know thou that there cannot either a greater, or more wonderfull victory be in this world obtained, then that of ones selfe. Enemyes may be overcome by stratagems, and frauds, and though they be overcome by might & force of armes, yet they are overcome who be inferiours, or be at least in fight become inferiours. But in the victory of ones selfe, the victory is not obtained by art, or fraud, but by vertue, and he is overcome who is equal and ever remaineth equal. In other victories the higher the vanquisher is raised, the more is the vanquished and overcome depressed and humbled, but in the victory of ones selfe the vanquished hath as high a place as hath the overcomer. In other encounters and fights enemyes are overcome, and therein passeth hatred, ire, and indignation, but he that overcometh himselfe, overcometh one, to whome he is most conioyned in love and freindship. And this difficulty maketh the victory the more glorious. Such is the victory of the obedient, for that while he doth voluntarily subiect himselfe to anothers commaund, he overcometh himselfe. And this victory is so much the more noble & glorious, with how much the more difficulty, namely against nature, it is obtained.

yned. And in this victory there are to be
ene many other victoryes. For an obedi-
nt Religious man maketh the senses, appe-
tes, add passions to be at reasons cōmaund,
nd reason it selfe againe togeather with his
& for his owne iudgment to be subiect to the will &
ndgment of the Superiour. And this also is
or the least victory to yield and deliuer vp
he honour of the triumph to another. He
hat in battaile turneth his backe and run-
neth away, looseth the victory: but in obe-
dience he turneth his backe, who refuseth to
submit himselfe to another.

3. Againe, Obedience is so stout a war-
riour, as it also fighteth for other vertues a-
gainst all those, that oppose themselves a-
gainst the Religious state, and perfection.
If the concupiscence make warre against
Chastity, Obedience commeth forth, and
causeth the will to deny consent, and to re-
member the Vow that was formerly made
of leading a chaste life. If the desire of tem-
poral things insult vpon Religious pouerty,
Obedience riseth vp against it, and perswa-
deth pouerty to keep the promise of vsing
no propriety in any thing. When the Diuel
inciteth any to transgression of the rules of
Religion, Obedience, as a faithfull defender
of Religion, is in armes and stoutly standeth
against

against him. As often as the perturbation of mind impugne reason, Obedience com-
poeth them, and causeth euery particu-
lar faculty of the mind to shew obedience
where it should. By all these most noble
victoryes a coniecture may be made, how
great an efficacy and glory is that of Obedi-
ence; and that a Religious man, as long as
he shall haue so noble a champion to defend
his quarrell, must needs fight with good
successe, and go away with many victoryes.
The Generall of the warre, if he desire to
haue good souldiers, and to ouercome his
enemies, must haue a speciall consideration
and regard of them, who fight manfully
with the enemy.

4. After that the Diuell had by the sin
of disobedience supplanted *Adam*, he began
to make great reckoning of disobedience, &
vpon his flag, which he did set vp, and dis-
play in signe of victory, framed this word,
poesy: Inobedience the daughter of Pride,
the mother of death, the worlds ruine, and
Religious bane and infection. By these he
triumphed long. But I againe raysed vp and
displayed the Crosses banner, wheron en-
ding my life by obedience, I ouercame death
and repayed the hurts by *Adams* disobedi-
ence done to mankind. And therefore the

morte

notte or poesie of my banner is this: Obedience Humilityes daughter, Spiritual lifes mother, the worlds Redresse, and Religions Gouvernesse. Of these commendations, which be most true, thou mayst vnderstand the excellency of Obedience. For seeing it is humilites daughter, whose proper office is to exalt the humble, it cannot but haue a part in the same property, as to be seene in me, to whome it gayned a most happy victory over all myne enemyes, accompanied also with a most glorious triumph. Sonne, none can continue stable and perseuere in Religion, vnles he fight. He that fighteth not vnder obediences colours, must needs fight vnder disobediences, which is Sathans banner.

5. It is out of question, that the excellency of the will, which is by a Religious man offered and sacrificed to me by the Vow of Obedience, addeth great force to the sacrifice, first the will is not only the noblest part of man, but also the queene of al the faculties of the mind. And the dignity and worth of this sacrifice increaseth the more, the more I esteeme of it. And how could I not but highly esteeme of Religious Obedience, in which a Religious man offereth me his liberty, which all the world maketh so great

great reckoning off? Is not this gift such, it should be held for great? For if I esteeme greatly of Pouerty & Chastity, I am bound to make much more of Obedience. For Pouerty offereth me the externall goods only, Chastity for loue of me only deprineth the body of corporall pleasures, which be the goods therof. But Obediēce offereth me the Internall goods of mind, which by how much they excell the goods of fortune and of body, by so much the oblation of them is more excellent, and more acceptable to me.

6. It cannot be denyed, but that *Abraham* obedience was most excellent, when at the first word I spake, he resolved to sacrifice vnto me his only and most louing sonne *Isaac*. Neither was *Isaac* his obedience lesse memorable, who to obey me in the person of his Father, suffered himselfe to be bound, and out of a most noble courage & hart, in the flower of his youth offred his head to be cut from his shoulders. But I make no lesse reckoning of a good religious mans obedience, which comprehenderh in it the perfection of the obedience of them both. Of *Abraham* indeed, because a Religious man doth loue himselfe as well, as did *Abraham* his sonne: and of his sonne, because a Religious man out of as great a fortitude of

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mind bindeth himselfe by Vow of Obedience, as did *Isaac* suffer himselfe to be fast bound by his father. Neither doth he with lesse promptitude offer his owne will to be cut off by the sword of spirituall Vow, then did *Isaac* his necke by the materiall sword. Moreouer by the difference between *Abraham* and a Religious mans obedience, it appeareth, that this is to be preferred before that. For in that, a commaundment was layd vpon *Abraham*, in this it was but counsaile: that was only in will, this both in will and fact: his act endured but for a short space, this mans fact for his whole life.

7. Sonne, wilt thou go beyond *Abraham* obedience? Seeke prompt obedience in all things, for that God is no lesse pleased with Obedience in little matters, then in great. Further certayne it is, that no worke though by the iudgment of the world it be thought honorable, is of any accompt with me, if it hath not a conformity with the diuine will. Let a man dispose all his goods for the behoof of the poore: Let him suffer persecutions, and be contemned: Let him dy for the fayth; if these and the like workes be not done according to my will, they are neither pleasing to me, nor meritorious at all. But the vertue of Obedience, as also of

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Charity

Charity her sister, causeth a Religious man to conforme his works to Gods will, and consequently maketh them meritorious. Adde, that a creature indewed with reason, is then said to be perfect, when it reposes in the diuine wil, neither hath a will to any thing, but what the Creatour hath a will to. And by what other vertue is the Religious man made prompt to obey Gods will, then by Obedience? Who forceth a Religious man to haue a will neither lesse, nor more then his Creatour in whom consisteth true perfection, but Obedience? O if all Religious men were so hartly louers of Obedience, as the excellency threof deserueth, it would be much more reckoned of in Religions then now it is, and there would be great store of perfect Religious persons.

Of the profit and vtility, that Obedience bringeth to a Religious man.

CHAP. XXIII.

LORD, though a Religious man receiue many, and very excellent vtilities by Obedience, yet I would thinke it much better, if thou thy self without the help of other Superiours, wouldst commaund, & ordayne all: for we would in a most proper manner

manner obey thee, neither would there be any place left for murmurations, neither wouldst thou euer giue any occasion of complaints; and in few wordes, thy gouerning would be most sweet. And if that may seeme not to haue bene conuenient, yet thou mightest haue done well, if thou shouldst gouerne vs by an Angell, who as he should be of more credit, and authority with vs, so would we more reuerence him, then men.

2. Sonne, all this that thou sayst, springeth out of the fountaine of selfe loue. If Religious men were spirits, it would be conuenient that they should be gouerned either by me, or by some Angell, but because they be composed of a body, and a spirit, it is very agreable that they be gouerned by a man, their like; and the same requireth the sweet prouidence, whereby the whole frame of this world is gouerned. When I brought the world to the true sayth, I sent not Angells, but men, & for men I gouerne it. I did also found Religions, not by Angells, but by men, and therefore fitting it is, they should be gouerned by them. It heere an Angell were a Superiour, how often would these, or the like wordes proceed from mens mouths? If this Angell our Su-

perigour, had experience of the troubles of the flesh, the burdens of body, and the miseries of this life, as we haue, he would take more compassion on vs, then he doth. How many excuses would not take place with an Angell, which now haue place with a man, Superiour? How many scruples would Religious men haue, if they should be gouerned by an inuisible Superiour? And more then this, euery Superiour ought to help his subiects rather by example of life, then by word of mouth; but if the Superiour should be inuisible, he could not giue any such example for imitation: and therefore better it is, that the Superiour be an Angell rather in conditions & manners, then by nature. And where it is sayd, that the Superiour, if he should be an Angell, should be more loued and respected by his subiects, then if he were a mortall man, is not true. For whereas I am in the Superiour, he that loueth not me, nor obeyeth me in a man, my Vicegerent, would loue and obey me lesse in an Angell.

3. Call to thy remembrance, what my beloued disciple *Iohn* wrote: If thou louest not thy neighbour (quoth he) when thou seest, how canst thou loue God, when thou seest not? If thou obeyest not the Superiour

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Superiour whome thou seest, how wilt thou
obey thy Superiour whome thou seest not?
But how great humility would it be to be
subiect to an Angell? For whiles the Reli-
gious do for loue of me subiect theleus to a
man, as to my substitute, and obey him, as
they do me, it is an act not only of great
Humility, but also of Fortitude, Magnani-
mity, Fayth, Hope, and Chariry, so much
the more pleasing vnto me, the more ver-
gues it goeth accompanied with. He that
submitterh himselfe to a man for my sake,
will lesse submit himselfe to an Angell. It
is my will, that a Religious man must do:
And it little skillcth, whether it be declared
by a man, or an Angell. A regard is not so
much to be had of him who speaketh, or
commaundeth, as of him, in whose name
he speaketh, or commaundeth. Necessary
it is that water runne into the garden, but
it skillerh not, whether it be brought in by
conducts of lead, or of siluer.

4. Sonne, dost thou now desire to vn-
derstand the vtilityes of Obedience? Tell
me, if one should ride through daungerous
rockes, and downefall places vpon a wild,
and vnruely horse, and one should be ready
to offer his help and payne to lead his horse
by hand, through all those so many dan-
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gers, would he not thinke that a speciall benefit were offered to him? No doubt, he would esteeme it a most great one. And if he should refuse to vse so great a benefit, should he not shew himself a very mad man? Our body, vitamed in regard of the disordered passions, that raigne in it, is this unruly horse. The errors that are wont in the spirituall life to be common downefalls and cragged riour is he, who is ready to fall from our horses, that we fall. How great the madnesse of a man should be, who is in such great dangers to be galled and hurt? For them, that are in the swymming, it is good to have mens armes. A Religious man, who hath his armes, and permitteth himself to be pulled downe of another, swimmeth in our armes, and swimmeth securely in the waues of spirituall daungers.

5. Another vtility is, that Obedience freeth a religious man from an infinit number of molestations and troubles. Nothing tormenteth a man so much, as do the anxious cogitations of mind, of which the miserable man, who lyueth in the world, is meruaylously rent and gnawne, as is the vic-

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vpon his owne affayres and actions is too
combersome. For he must not only consi-
der, what is to be done, but also when,
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all this is nothing, & nothing
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discretion, I make no reckoning
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gious man from those and allover cares,
and cogitations, commending this one
thing alone, that he obey, and lay all the
rest vpon his Superiours shoulders, whose
charge it is to see, what, when, how, and by
what wayes euery thing is to be done. It is
in him to procure all things necessary both
for the spirituall, and temporall: for he is
the Father, the mother, maister, prouider,
directour, guide, and all. What other thing

gers, would he not thinke that a speciall benefit were offered to him? No doubt, he would esteeme it a most great one. And if he should refuse to vse so great a benefit, should he not shew himself a very mad man? Our body, vntamed in regard of the disordered passions, that raigne in it, is this unruly horse. The errors that are wont in the spirituall life to be committed, be those downefalls and cragged ockes. Our Superior is he, who is ready to guide and lead our horses, that we fall not. *¶* Thinke then how great the madnes of that Religious man should be, who should refuse in so great dangers to be gouerned by his Superior? For them, that want the skill of swimming, it is good to rest vpon others mens armes. A Religious man, who obeyeth, and permitteth himselfe to be gouerned of another, swimmeth in his Superiours armes, and swimmeth securely in the waues of spirituall daungers.

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6. But all this is nothing, & nothing worth, if it be compared with the cogitations of spirituall actions. For those, that they may be pleasing, must be conforme to my will, and if they be not done with Charity, and discretion, I make no reckoning of them. And Obedience exempteth a Religious man from those and all other cares, and cogitations, commending this one thing alone, that he obey, and lay all the rest vpon his Superiours shoulders, whose charge it is to see, what, when, how, and by what wayes every thing is to be done. It is in him to procure all things necessary both for the spirituall, and temporall: for he is the Father, the mother, maister, prouider, director, guide, and all. What other thing

then is it to liue vnder obedience, then to cast his burden vpon anothers backe? If you were entred into a wide wood, that almost had no way out, and dangerous for the cruell wild beasts therein, and were further very sore loaden, should not he do you a singular pleasure, who should not only bring you safe out of the wood, but also ease you of your burden, by taking it vpon his owne shoulders? And what other thing is it to obey, the to trauayle the more securely with a guide in the way, & without any burden to beare? He that acknowledgeth not a benefit, neither regardeth, nor maketh reckoning whence it cometh, or who is the authour thereof.

7. There is added another vtility of Obediēce, that the things which be good of themselues, it maketh more excellent; and what is of very little worth, it causeth to be had in greater esteeme. He that moued by Gods grace, doth of a free will exercise a good worke, doth well, and meriteth a reward according to the greatnes of the work and his pious affection withall: but he that doth of Obedience exercise the same workes, out of the same disposition of mind that the other did, meriteth much more by occasion of the vertue, & efficacy, which the
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vertue of Obedience addeth to that worke. And more then that, Obedience is so fruitfull, and of such power, as it maketh the works that are of necessity, more noble also, and those that of themselves are not praise worthy, as be the actions of eating, drinking, sleeping, walking &c. if the Religious do them by obedience, pleasing vnto me, which I also reward according to the measure of the pious affection & Charity they be done withall. And it sometimes hapneth, that the Obedient without doing any worke, maketh more spirituall gaine, then he who doth the worke.

8. The Religious, who hath a desire to fast for the punishing of his flesh, for his sinnes, and yet for Obedience sake forbeareth to fast, meriteth more before God by not fasting, then doth another fasting of deuotion. For this man hath the only merit of his fasting: but that man hath merited not only the good of fasting, because he was of his part ready to do it, but also the merit of Obedience. Iudge thou now, whether that be not a priuiledg, both profitable & healthfull, which I haue conferred & bestowed vpon the Religious, by the benefit of Obedience. And how am I affected, thinkest thou, vnto them, who are so little

devoted to obedience? O what a detriment and losse sustayneth that man in his spirituall goods, who doth all of his owne will that he might do by obedience. Every good worke, great or little, if it be signed with the seale of Obedience, is of great esteeme and price, as well in heauen, as in earth.

How it is conuenient, that a Religious man be studious of Obedience.

CHAP. XXIII.

SONNE, if thou be resolved with thy selfe to imitate me, necessary it is, that thou haue an earnest desire to imbrace the vertue of Obedience, and make thy selfe fit for the performing of perfect obedience. Remember that I assumed, & tooke vpon me the forme of a seruant, that I might subiect my selfe to men, and obey them for thy soules good. Neither did I propose alone, and openly professe, that I was come not to do myne owne will, but the will of my Father who sent me; but I began also very tymely to obey the precepts of his law, whereunto I was not yet bound, neither might I be drawn from the obseruation of the either by shame or confusion, or for any daunger of life. And as my disciple and Euangelist

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uangelist *Iohn* wrote, I called Obedience, my Meate. And not without cause, for there was not any thing in this life, wherein I tooke so great a pleasure, as in doing of my heauenly Fathers will, in so much as whatsoeuer hapned bitter or sower, became to me sweet thereby. For this cause the Chalice of my passion, which was to my humanity most bitter, was most readily accepted of my spirit, as a most sweet cup, because it was offered me with the hand of Obedience by my Father. What Religious man then can with reason refuse obedience which was meate to me? It is an ill signe when the Lords & Maisters meate cannot content the seruant.

2. But what can it be, Sonne, that pleaseth thee not in Obedience? It is, because thou seest thy selfe in subiection to a man? or that thou art ashamed to be commaunded by another? I am the Lord of this vniuerse, I am the wisdom of my heauenly father, and yet was I in subiection to men; neither that, by the way alone, or for a few tymes, but euen from the tyme of my coming into the world, vntill my most ignominious death vpon the Crosse. Neither obeyed I the good and iust alone, as my Mother, and *Ioseph* my fosterfather, but the vniust

vniust and wicked Iudges also, as *Annas*, *Caiphas*, *Herode*, and *Pilate*, who though they knew me to be vniustly accused, nor that any thing of that which they wickedly obiected, could be proued against me, did neuerthelessse condemne me to be crowned with thornes, to be whipped, and to the Crosse it selfe; all which I tolerated with patience, without making of any appeale, or vsing any Apology for my selfe: & more then that without speaking any word at al. I also obeyed their peruerse seruants, who did without cause buffet me, spit vpon my face, and most ignominiously dragged me vp and downe through the publike streets. And of all this I complayned not, & though I might haue reuenged my selfe, and might most iustly haue punished the for the most extreme iniury that was done vnto me, yet I did forbear, and did readily do all that they commaunded me. Tell me now, whether it be yet any hard and painefull matter for thee to obey? Thou art not for Obedience bound fast to a piller, & there whipt as I was. Thou standest not with thy hands bound at thy backe, and with a rope put about thy necke, drawne and haled through the streets of the Citty, as I did, and was.

3. Can it be possible, that thou shouldst

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be ashamed to obey in good things, that redound to thy glory and merit, when as thy Lord obeyed in ill things, that made to his reproach, torments, and ignominy? Reason now, and consider with thy selfe, whether it be more conuenient promptly to obey the commaunds of Superiours, or to refuse, if any thing be commaunded little pleasing thyn owne appetite. And though it be an easy matter to do, yet the enemy will cause it to seeme hard and paynesfull, that thou mayst either not obey at all, or that thou loose the merit of Obedience. Thy parents *Adam* and *Eue* may be produced for an example, to whom when as God had giuen a commaundmēt to abstaine from the fruit but of one tree only in paradise, which was not any sore or hard commaundment, sith there were many other fruite-bearing trees in place, the crafty enemy of mākind wrought so in their minds, as it might seeme an ouer hard commaundement, and thereby the more easily draw them to transgresse it. It ought not to seeme hard vnto the seruant to go on that way, which his Lord & Master went before him with much more difficulty and daunger: and though the way should be dangerous, so it be not impossible to passe, yet meet it is, that he go through.

4. Sonne, as long as the bird is loose, and vpon her winges in the field, she doth what she list, but when she is caught, and put in a cage, she doth as it pleaseth the owner. When thou wert in the world, thou liuedst, as thou listest, thou didst eate at pleasure, thou didst whatsoever pleased thee, because thou wert thyne owne superior, which was then conuenient for thee, sith in the world all make profession to do and gouerne themselves as they please, and after their owne manner. But when thou renouncedst the world, thou didst choose to thy selfe another Superiour, who might supply my place, and thou madest professiō of directing thy life, not after thyne owne will and iudgment, but after anothers. He therefore, who beeing in religion continueth to liue after his owne manner, as he did in the world, declareth that he is not yet gone out of the world to religion; or sheweth himselfe to be a Religious man indeed in outward habit, who inwardly is a man of the world, or rather neither the one nor the other. Where Obedience is not, there neither Religion can vse it owne name, because they cannot long continue subiects, sith they be not conioyned with the head.

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of a City, is the concord, and yunion of the citizens : so the yunion and conjunction of the subiects with the Superiour their head, which obedience caueth, is the safety of religion . Where Obedience is, there is consent, and consent conserueth and strengthneth euery congregation, though there be many in it . My Apostles were in number few, abiect, and contemptible in sight of the world, yet did they great matters, because they were concordant, and so obsequious to me their Superiour, as that they might not forgoe their Obedience, they chose to loose their liues . Therefore he that neglecteth to obey even in small matters, knoweth not the worth of obedience, as the Apostles, and their Maister did, who were more ready to loose life, then to leaue Obedience.

6. In the warfare of the world, the Obedience of the souldiers towards their Generalls and Captaynes is so strict, and so straitely obserued, as they be hanged for the very least disobedience, and yet those that serue in the wars, make no Vow of Obediēce at al, but only promise vpon their oath to fight against the enemy, and to defend, and maintayne the City, or strong hold against him . If then the temporall warfare

warrefare requireth so exact Obedience; neither permitteth any the least disobedience in tryfling matters to passe unpunished; how great, vpon iust cause, should the spirituall and Religious warfare exact, whercinto none is admitted, vnles he bind himselfe vnto Obedience by a sollemne Vow? And how may any disobedience be tolerated in it, sith it is so proper in this warfare to obey the Superiours, as if obedience be wanting, the spirituall warfare must needs come to decay.

7. There be some who indeed refuse not a Superiour, but they would not haue any thing commaunded them by him, especially if it be hard, and troublesome. This is not the desire of a good, and true Religious man, labouring to perfection; but only to be willing to sceme Religious in name, and not indeed; and to wish that the Superiour were a Statua or Image, & not a living man. Others would haue a Superiour industrious and diligent in procuring necessaries, appertayning to meate, drinke, cloathing, and like commodities; and in all euents to take a special care in patronizing, defending, and helping them: but they wish him not to be so vigilant in obseruation of Religious discipline, which dependeth on

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Obedience. And this desire is much worse then the former: for to wish this, is nothing els then to haue a will and desire, that the Superiour make his subiects, not good Religious, but idle and slouthfull, who may haue care of their bodyes, and neglect to direct their soules in the way of spirit; who may be a good companion, and a bad Superior. The subiect who hath a desire, that his Superiour should not performe the office of a good Superiour, doth manifestly declare, that he carryeth himselfe not for a good subiect vnder him.

Of the first degree of Obedience, which consisteth in execution of any thing commaunded.

CHAP. XXV.

Sonne, thou must not thinke; thou shalt done much, if thou shalt at any tyme haue done what thy Superiour hath commaunded thee: for this is the very lowest degree of Obedience, and common to all kind of subiects, whether seruants or bondslaves: yea it is found in the very brute beasts, which go whither soeuer their keeper driueth them, and do whatsoeuer he becometh who hath care of the. He is a poore

& miserable religious man, who whiles he obeyeth not his Superiours will, doth lesse then the brute beasts. And though this first degree of Obedience, which consisteth in the execution of that which is commaunded, be of it selfe the lowest, yet if it be kept as it should be, it is very pleasing vnto me. Foure conditions and qualitiyes made my Obedience, that I performed to my Heavenuely Father, the more gratefull, and these be, Promptitude, Entirenesse in all points, Fortitude, and Perseuerance. These make a Religious mans Obedience acceptable, and the more easy be they, the greater the will is of imitating me.

2. Not to obey with promptitude and speede, is a defect, and nothing pleaseth me. If it grow of a cold & languishing will it is the more displeasing vnto me, because the effect is bad, and the cause worse. He that hath tyme to do what Obedience commaundeth and putteth it off, suffereth the losse of tyme, and putteth himselfe in danger of not doing what he should. And if the Religious differeth to obey, because he is busied in some particular matter of his owne, he displeaseth me more, because he preferreth himselfe, and his owne busines before the busines of his Superiour. The

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truly obedient, that he may obey perfectly, leaue his busines begon, and vnperfect. O how much do thole religious please me, who if but a signe be giuen to do any thing that the holy Rule, or Superiour shall appoint, do leaue off, euen pious works, they haue in hand, and come running to what is commaunded. And they gaine my singular fauour, who to do any act of Obedience interrupt the talke they haue begon with me in prayer.

3. Consider thou now, how little those are in my grace, who blinded with selfeloue; leaue they should be deprived of any their least commodities or recreations, be dull and slow in accomplishing the worke that is appointed them by the Superiour. And I am offended more, if they vse the same delay, when the bell giueth a signe to prayer, or other spirituall exercises. O how much do such manner of men hurt themselves, and the Community also, especially seeing that when they are called to thinges commodious for their body, as to meate, drinke, recreations &c. they vse no delay at all, but be diligent, prompt and ready. Certs, it were better for them neuer to shew themselves abroad: for where there becometh not any iust cause of purging them,

there is a manifest offence & icandal giuen. Those that be condemned as slaues to the Gallies for their crymes, be so ready to obey, as that a signe is no sooner giuen, then the thing is done and dispatched: and they are so quicke and speedy in execution therof as whiles the thing is yet in doing they cry aloud, That it is dispatched. And though they be so diligent and quicke for feare of blowes, yet the loue of God should make the Religious more prompt in this kind, fith loue is more strong, and more effectuall then feare.

4. Neither is this to be scene in the Gallies alone, where a man shall see the chaines, and the marriners with whips in their hands, but also in the Courts of great Lords. For I aske of thee, what is it that maketh the seruants so ready and quicke at the very voyce, and call of their Lords? Is it the hope of reward? But that is more liberall with me. Is it the loue they beare towards their Lord? But much greater loue is due to me: for goodnes and bounty, which is the cause of loue, is farre more excellent in me, and the reward which is expected from me, is without cōparison greater. Indeed the slownesse of the Religious proceedeth of the want of loue. If the sub-

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jects were better affected to their Superiour they would also be more diligent in fullfilling of Obedience. In which kind the children of this world be more wise, and more ready, then the children of light.

5. Another condition is, that Obedience be intiere: for such was my owne Obedience. It shall be inough for Religious men to loue this entierneesse, if they thoroughly vnderstand, that this is my will, and such the Superiours intention, that what is commaunded be entierly done. There be those, who be only ready to obey in matters of great moment, but not in little. To others it seemeth inough, if they do part of the things by the Superiour commaunded, and leaue the rest vndone. I know not who hath made them Iudges, or Interpreters of Obedience. Neither do I know, whence they haue learned, that it is not necessary to obey to all that the Superiour decreeth or commaundeth.

6. Let them say, when they vowed Obediēce, whether they thought they were to obey in all things, or but in some? Whether they vnderstood, that they were allwayes to obey, or only for a tyme? And if they vnderstood, that they were to obey not in all things, but for a certaine tyme

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only,

only, who will accept of such a vow? Surely I accepted not the vow of half, and mayned Obedience, but of that which is entire and whole. If some servant should do but part of those things that were commaunded him by his maister, when he could haue done the whole, he should not be kept long in the house, and though he were still kept, yet in giuing vp his accompts it would soon appeare, whether one did owe any thing to the other, the servant to the maister, or the maister to the servant. He is not worthy of reward, but of punishment, who serueth not at the will of his maister. Many liue in Religion, with whome an accompt shall in the end be taken, and then it will be vnderstood, whether they merite reward or punishment, who haue not performed the whole and entier Obedience.

7. The third condition is, that obedience be done with Fortitude. The Religious man pleaseth me not, who manifesteth a fortitude of mind in obeying, when ealy matters are commaunded, or obeyeth willingly whiles matters go well with him, & the Superiour commaundeth those things that be contenting vnto him. This is not true Fortitude, nor can a stout obedient person be well by this way tryed. While

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sayleth away merrily: and an infirme and
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Fortitude of an obedient person is found
and discouered in painefull & hard things;
as when incommodities, labours & paynes
be to be endured; when present afflictions
of body keep him not from doing the acts
of Obedience; when the courage getteth
strength in ouercoming of difficultyes.

82. 12 O how imprudently doest thou,
my Sonne, while to the end nothing may
be often commaunded thee; thou therewith
thy selfe vntoward in performing Obedi-
ence, deceiued with this opinion, that he
is wont to be furcharged with many la-
bours, and offices, who manifesteth his
own promptitude, and facility in obeying.
For what other thing is this; then to con-
demne the Superiour of indiscretion, and
imprudency? Then to put away a most
rich crowne from himselfe? If I giue thee
health and strength of body for the taking
of paynes, wherefore art thou so afraid of
labours? Art thou ignorant, that the more
thy paynes be increased, the more is increa-
sed thy merit? Wherefore then sufferest thou
thy selfe to be overcome of slouth & lazines?
This is not Fortitude, but malicious care-
lesnes.

liness. I did not so, who, when I could haue brought thee to thy saluation by easy meanes, did neuertheless choose the most difficult and hard for thy greater good, as was death in the flower of my youth: neither chose I any manner of death, but that which was most ignominious and bitter, before which there went so many and so great torments, not only contumelious and disgracefull, but also cruell.

9. The fourth condition is Perseuerance, which if it be wanting, there is obtayned no Crowne at all, nor is there any merit of Obedience. I did runne the way of Obedience till death, contemning and remouing all difficultyes and impediments that encountred me on the way. My Apostles also persecuted in the obseruation of my precepts to the very end: and therefore he who by his inconstancy either for some commodity of his owne, or for other humane respect, neglecteth to performe Obedience, is not a disciple of myne. To begin Obedience, and after without iust cause not to execute it, is a property of children, not of Religious persons.

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Of the second Degree of Obedience, apper-
tayning to the Will.

CHAP. XXVI.

SONNE, thy will is a blind faculty and power, and thou art further blinded by thyne owne passions, and so thou canst not be a good guide thereto, least both of you fall into the ditch. It must therefore needs rely vpon me, and vpon him who supplyeth my place in gouerning. And this requireth the second degree of Obedience, namely, that thou not only subiect thyne own will to that of thy Superiour, & conforme thyne vnto his, but that thou make his will thyne, which thou shalt effect, if thou imprint thy Superiours wil within thy soule. Two slips sprouting out of this grasse, to witt, the Will, and the Nill of the Superiour, are diligently to be conserued, and if any other bud should peraduenture begin to peep forth, it is presently to be cut off, least it take away the vigour and strength from the yong grasse.

2, Obedience, which appertayneth to this second degree, requireth three proper-tyes, which make it pleasing vnto me. One is, that it be voluntary; a second, that it be

merry; the third, that it be fervent. These three properties have one common enemy which troubleth them very much, and is named Repugnancy. The Religious that quercometh not this Repugnancy, is easily overcome, because he knoweth not to obey cherefully and fervently: and if the Repugnancy proceed from the superiour part, what is voluntary, is taken away also. But tell me, my Sonne, whence groweth the Repugnancy, that maketh thee so froward and backward in the performance of Obedience? Is it peradventure of this, that thou thinkest, by subiecting thy selfe to a Superiour, thou preiudicest thine own liberty and honour? If thou be therefore sorry, and thy grief causeth a Repugnancy, thou hast no occasion of being griued, but of being glad rather, seeing (as I said els where) he who for loue of me submitteth himselfe to a Superiour, submitteth himselfe to me, the Lord of all; and in this he doth not a little increase his owne estimation and honour, because he doth a matter worthy a generous & magnanimous mind. And whiles he doth tread selfe loue, as it were vnder foot (which neither all, nor many do) he plainly declareth, what a regard he hath of me, and of the loue of me. If I
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he Lord of Maieſty did for the loue of thee
put my ſelfe into ſubiectiõ of men; and
obeyed them withall reſpectiue manner;
why ſhouldeſt thou be ſory, whiles thou
ſubiecteſt thy ſelfe to thy Superiours my ſub-
ſtitute?

3. Conſider Sonne, that this is to be
ſubiect: conſider that thou art come to
Religion, not to commaund, but to obey.
If thou wouldeſt in thy Superiours voyce
acknowledge myne, and if thou wouldeſt
conſider, that to obey thy Superiour, is to
obey me, thou wouldeſt reioyce to haue any
thing commaunded thee, and thou wouldeſt
obey both feruently, and moſt willingly.
To thinke further, that in obeying thou
forgoeſt thy liberty, is a notable errour,
when as it is not only not loſt, but alſo per-
fected: for as much as by the benefit of O-
bedience it is conformed and conioyned to
the diuine will, which is an infallible rule
of working well, and therefore as long as
mans will is conioyned with it, it cannot
but worke well. Neither is it to be doubted
but that, that liberty which relyeth vpon
good, is more perfect then that which is
otherwhiles accompanied with euil. That
is not loſt, that is giuen to God, but it is
made more ſecure, that it may not be loſt.

4. Where.

4. Wherefore the Obedience of the second degree, that it may be pleasing unto me, must be voluntary, and not forced. Some there be, who are afraid to be employed by their Superiour, and therefore they seek sundry pretences, and deuasions to auoyd it, one while by hiding themselves out of the way, another while by excusing themselves, and sometymes by pretending themselves to be busied in other matters: but if they be at any tyme sent any whither by their Superiours commaundment, they go with a very ill will. Others had rather obey one then another, as though I were not in all Superiours. But they plainly discover, that they obey not for loue of me. He that in Obedience giuen to Superiours regardeth me, maketh no differēce between Superiors, but equally obeyeth all alike. O how much be they deceyued also, who make it no matter of conscience, if they contradict their Superiors will in spiritual matters, as in fastings, prayers, mortifications, and other thinges of that kind: for disobedience forgoeth not the name of disobedience in spirituall and good matters also.

5. Others againe there be, who obey promptly in any busines pleasing to their
owne

owne inclination and nature, and in oother things that please them not, they find a great auersion, disgust, and repugnancy. And this is imperfect and miserable Obedience, because it is certaine, that it hath it source from the spring of selfeloue. The misery is the greater for this, that where such obey vnwillingly, they do not only loose their merit, but also by occasion of their disgust, and repugnancy they make the act of obeying the more difficult, and hard: and the detriment and hurt which followeth, and should be vnto them most sweet refection, is through their owne default turned into bitter poyson. For he that obeyeth with a regret, and vnwillingly, ordinarily murmureth, is angry, and giueth an offence to others; and in place of a reward that he might haue deserued, if he had obeyed willingly, he doth voluntarily procure his owne punishment.

6. Sonne, hast thou a desire to be freed from these miseries? Stir vp in thy selfe an effectuall desire of obeying me promptly & sincerely for the tyme to come, and craue this gift of him who is able to giue it thee. Next, exercise thy selfe manfully in al kind of Obedience, both great and little, and thinke, that he susteyneth a great losse of
spiritual

spirituall gayne, who obeyeth with an ill will. He that is neere to death, and dyeth not willingly, maketh his passage the more painefull: euen so he who doth Obedience but yet with a repugnancy of the will, is a more torment to himselfe, and therefore better it is of necessity to make a vertue. He that is able to carry his crosse vpon his shoulders, let him not trayle it vpon the ground.

7. Some will indeed enter into the way of Obedience, but with this condition that they may go before their Superiour, not follow him. And these be they, who when they haue proposed in their mind any exercise, or busines to do, they seeke by sundry wayes to draw the Superiour to their owne mind, and therein they be so anxious, and sollicitous, as if they compasse not their owne desire, they are much troubled. Neither doth their imperfection stay heere, but they further will do that exercise after their owne way, and not after the manner that is appointed by their Superiour; and so their will goeth before the will of the Superiour. He walketh not in security, who carryeth his light behind him.

8. The Superiour is he, who carryeth the light wherwith he must shew thee thy way

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way, not thou him, and therefore thou must follow him, and not go before him. Who draweth his Superiour to his owne manner of doing, seeketh not to obey his Superiour, but that his Superiour obey him: and he that endeauoureth to draw his Superiour to haue a will to that, which is in his owne will, doth preferre his owne will before his Superiours, & therefore his fruits shall not be the fruits of Obedience, but of his owne will, which he tasteth of himself, and not I.

9. Another property of this second degree is, that Obedience be merry and cheerfull, which ariseth of the former. For he that obeyeth willingly, obeyeth also merrily: and he againe, who obeyeth with an ill will, obeyeth with heauynes & grief. A little Obediēce done for loue of me with ioy, pleaseth me more, then great Obediēce done with an heauynes. He that obeyeth not merrily, declareth that he loveth me not, because sad Obediēce displeaseth me. Moreouer he increaseth his owne burden, euen as he who obeyeth merrily maketh his burden of Obediēce the lighter. O in how great an errour is he, who accuseth himselfe to a sad, and delaying Obediēce, because he satisfieth neither me, nor

nor his Superiour, nor his owne conscience, and within a while there creepeth vpon such an one, a loathing and disgust of Religious discipline, and after loathing there followeth a most vnhappy life. For he is miserable & vnhappy, who is not content with his owne estate.

10. The third property is, that Obedience be feruent. Ferueur ariseth of loue, and if thou loue Obedience, nothing will be commaunded thee that thou mayst not execute both with ioy and feruour. I know well inough, who serue and obey me feruently, and who coldly, and I know againe who they be, who can obey me with more feruour, then others. O if Religious men would consider me present in all their actions, and examine witha'l, how pleasing it is to me, and what a pleasure to see the subjects manfully, cheerfully, and feruently to satisfy the precepts of their Superiours. If they would also consider the blessings wherewith I preuent such obedient persons, no doubt but they would be most forward in performing the actions of Obedience.

11. Sonne, where is that ferueur and heate, that thou hadst in the beginning of thy conuersion? Where is now that exceeding great loue that moued thee to desire,
that

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that many difficult and hard matters might be commaunded thee? Can it possibly be, that the greater knowledge thou hast had of this very thing, the lesse thou shouldst do? The scholler, that is found more ignorant at the end of the yeare, then he was in the beginning, deserueth to be thrust out of the schoole, and to be put to a more base & contemptible manner of life.

Of the third degree of Obedience, appertayning to the Vnderstanding.

CHAP. XXVII.

SONNE, this third and highest degree of Obedience, appertayning to the Vnderstanding, requireth that a religious man thinke and iudge that to be the best, which is determined and appoynted by his Superiour: yea, and it requireth that the subject haue neither a contrary, nor different iudgment from the Superiours iudgment. For the diuersity of iudgments is the cause of disquiet and trouble. The subject, who in will only conspireth with the Superiour, vpon the very least occasion that may cause a difference of iudgments, may differ in iudgment from him; but he that is once conioyned both by will, & vnderstanding vnto him, is not so easily separated in the

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one

one, or the other from him. For the vnderstanding teacheth the will, that diuision is not conuenient, though sometymes in the execution of Obedience all be not pleasing to the subjects mind. But whiles by reason he approueth that to be well done, whatsoever is ordayned by the Superiour, he putteth the will in a quiet state. This coniunction and conformity of iudgments also profiteth to the perfect execution of that which is commaunded. He that not only willeth that which the Superiour willeth, but also iudgeth that to be done, which the Superiour shall commaund, obeyeth far more perfectly, then doth he, who in will alone imbraceth the Superiours commaundment. He that needeth spurrs, is more holpen with two then with one, and two cords do more strongly bind then one.

2. Lord, I do not well conceiue, how the subject may conforme his iudgment to his Superiours iudgment in all things, as he may conforme his will. For sith the will is free, it may be bowed both wayes: but the vnderstanding, that is drawne from the known truth, and is not free, cannot bend it self, but that way wher the truth is: and therefore if the subjects vnderstanding,

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convinced by some reason, that representeth a thing as true, consent vnto it, and the Superiours vnderstanding, convinced by another different reason, inclyne another way in the same thing, how can the subject in this matter conforme his owne iudgment to the iudgment of his Superiour, when it is not in his power to reuoke his vnderstanding from the truth formerly knowne?

3. Sonne, what thou sayst, is true, when the truth is knowne; for then it so conuinceth the vnderstanding, as it cannot be induced, or inclined to the contrary. But when euidency and certainty is wanting, the vnderstanding, holpen by the will, may rather be inclined to one part, then to the other, and then the Obedient, that he erre not, ought to submit his iudgment to the iudgment of his Superiour, so as that he may not erre in will, he submitteth it also to the Superiours will. Neither yet, because many subjects be of more sharp witt, and of a more mature iudgment, then the Superiour is, be they therefore exempted from this subiection: for so long as they be members, they must be subject to the head. But suppose, that those subjects be more intelligent for knowledge of learning, yet in matter and manner of gouernement, God

euier giueth greater light to the Superiour, then to the subiects, and therefore his iudgment must be preferred & take place before the iudgments of others, and greatly to be reckoned of, sith I vse him in the gouerning and conseruing of Religious.

4. But admit, that the Superiour hath not commaunded something aright, which yet is not accompanied with sinne, whether doth the subiect therefore erre therein, if he obey? In no case. Is he deprived of the merit of Obedience? Neither. Why should he not submit his iudgment in all things to the Superiour? When I was in subiection to my Mother, and to my foster-father *Ioseph*, I obeyed them both readily, euen in those things, which I knew would fall out better, if they had beene done otherwise. It is not for the subiect to procure that, that may be best which is commaunded by the Superiour, but only to attend to this, that he execute in the best manner whatsoeuer shall be commaunded, & suffer the Superiour to appoint that which he himselfe shall iudge and thinke to be best. Neither must the subiect forbear the executing of the Superiours commaundment, though he be certaine, that he should do better if he did not. For the subiect is not
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iudge, but only the putter of that in practise which is commaunded, so there be no sin in doing it. This indeed is a defect of them who would that the Superiour should ordayne what were best, but yet they wil not do it, though theselues be otherwise bound thereto.

5. That the Obedience of the Vnderstanding is most pleasing vnto me, is a matter out of all question, sith it giueth the last perfection to the sacrifice that the Religious offereth, whilst together with the will he offereth both his Vnderstanding and his owne iudgment, which is the noblest faculty of man. Moreouer it is knowne to all how vehement a propension nature it selfe hath put into man to the following of his owne iudgment, and yet a Religious man restrayneth this propension so far, as for loue of me he voluntarily subiecteth his own iudgment to another, which I esteem highly of, and is very profitable to himselfe: for so he leadeth a quiet life, and most agreeable to a true Religious man: & on the contrary, he that relyeth vpon his owne iudgment, is neuer at repose in any thing, and liueth vnquietly.

6. This third degree of Obedience hath three propertyes. The first is called

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Simplicity,

Simplicity, which considering me in the Superiour, causeth the Religious man to put his Ordinations in execution, without any examination, whether he should allow them or not. O how displeasing vnto me is the disputing Obedience, which in whatsoever thing that is ordayned by the Superiour, euer asketh wherefore, for what intent, for what end this or that is appointed? I haue not called thee out of the world to dispute, or to examine those things that be by the Superiour determined and commaunded, but to do them. And that they be done, it is nothing necessary to know for what cause, how, & for what end they be done. Wherefore let it be thy care to do so much of Obedience, as thou art bound vnto, and know thou, that it appertayneth not to the subiect to enquire, what end the Superiours haue proposed vnto themselves in their offices. If the Patriarke *Abraham* had demaunded of God, for what cause he would haue him sacrifice his Sonne *Isaac*, vpon whome relyed the benedictions of Nations, & many other promises formerly made, his Obedience had not bene so commendable, neither had he merited so much as he did by simply obeying.

7. The truly Obedient seeketh nothing,
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but to do the commaundment. O how greatly did I fauour those Religious, who in the commaund of Superiours would not discusse and examine, whether they were profitable or otherwise; conuenient or nor, or the contrary. Whence it hapned, that commaunded by their Superiour, they laid hand vpon most cruell & fierce beasts, as Lyons, leapt into riuers, wated dry stocks for a long space together, and did many the like thinges, as strang as these. And these left behind them on earth noble examples of Obedience, and for them they haue, for their simplicity in obeying, obtayned most glorious Crownes in Heauen. Sonne, desirest thou, that God should haue a particular care of protecting thee, as he had of those holy Fathers? Obey then with simplicity.

8. The other property is Humility, without which neither Obedience, nor Chastity, nor Pouerty please me. For Humility is Obediences mother, and the one may not consist, and stand without the other. The Proud will not subiect himselfe to any, and therefore cannot be Obedient. Pride, because it calleth the subiect backe from the execution of the Superiours commaund, both depriueth of all merit, and increaseth the trouble.

The conclusion, of Religious Obedience.

CHAP. XXVIII.

SONNE, perfect Obedience requireth
 an abnegation of the owne iudgment,
 an entier resignation of the will, and an ex-
 act execution and performanee of what is
 commaunded. The true obedient regardeth
 not the person of him who commaundeth,
 and whome he obeyeth, but in him he ca-
 steth his eye vpon God, for loue of whome
 he obeyeth. The truly Obedient ceaseth not
 to obey, though he knoweth that an errour
 is committed in the manner of commaun-
 ding: neither relenteth he in Obedience,
 though the Superiour be imprudent, or
 subiect to any other imperfection. He is
 deceyued, who obeyeth, that his Superi-
 our may esteeme much of him, or that he
 may obtaine something at his hands, be-
 cause he is to obey for the loue of me.

2. The truly Obedient, at what tyme
 anything is commaunded, runneth not a-
 way, nor withdraweth himselfe into cor-
 ners, but rather offereth himselfe readily
 to what is commaunded, or to be com-
 maunded. The true Obedient regardeth
 not, whether it be from his chief Superiour

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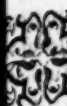
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or from a subordinate, but he doth with a like promptitude embrace the commandments of both. He that had rather obey in one thing, then in another, deserueth not the name of a truly Obedient man. He that more willingly obeyeth one Superiour, then another, is not perfectly Obedient. He that procureth that to be commanded him which he desireth, looseth rather then gayneth.

3. The truly Obedient searcheth not out, wherefore, or how this, or that is inioyned him, but it is inough to him to know, that it is commaunded. The truly Obedient, to make Obedience perfect, leaueth not his workes at halfes, and imperfect. He that obeyeth the Superiour for that he is wise, louing, kind, spirituall, dexterous, or liberall, is deceiued, because he is to obey him only, in that he is my Substitute, and holdeth my place. Reuerence is not exhibited to my Image and picture for the gold, or siluer whercof it is made, but because it representeth me: whence it is, that the like honour is done thereto, if it be made of paper, or wood, as there is when it is of siluer, or gold. In like manner all respect, reuerence, and Obedience ought to be giuen, and vsed

to the Superiour, not for the vertues
wherein he excelleth, but because he sup-
plyeth my place, and representeth
my person.

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THE
THIRD BOOKE
of Religious Perfection.

Wherein is handled the principall Vertues of a Religious man: and wherein perfection most of all consisteth.

Of Religious Humility.

CHAP. I.

 ONE, it is good to speake of Humility, but better it is to exercise it by deeds. What profiteth it by speaking, to deliuer many notable sayings, touching Humility, if in all that discourse thou seeke after vayne glory, and fondly brag of thy selfe? The Humble, who thinketh lowely of himselfe, busieth not himselfe

selfe in his owne commendable matters, but rather in remembring the praises of others. He that seeketh to seeme Humble, & hunteth after the glory of men, groweth in pride, and the more humble he would seem, the more doth his prid increasc with in. An humble man, as he acknowledgeth all his spirituall goods, & gifts to proceede from God, so doth he conceale them as much as he can, and locketh them vp with the key of modesty in some secret place. He doth not only repute himselfe in all his workes vnprofitable, but the more he laboureth, the more he thinketh himselfe bound vnto me. For seeing he holdeth whatsoeuer good he doth, to be nothing worth, he attributeth all his good workes vnto me: yea he is ashamed before me, that I disdaine not to vse his seruice, that is, so vile and contemptible an instrument, as he thinketh himselfe to be.

2. O happy Religious men, who do within their breasts intertaine so pious cogitationsof Humility: for by this they shew themselues the more precious in my sight, & the more deare vnto me, the more abiect and contemptible they make themselues for the loue of me. These be those, who haue found a fixed seate in my hart, whom

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most tenderly loue, and with whome I
create and conuerse familiarly. These be
they, whome I raise vp and honour in my
court of heauen, in the sight of my eternall
Father, and in the presence of my holy An-
gels. In the Kingdome of heauen he hath
not the more honorable place who was
most honoured on earth, but he who was
the more humble: and therefore my spirit
doth not without cause repose vpon the
humble, because he is diffident of his owne
forces, & relyeth altogeather vpon my grace.
I haue reason to communicate my grace to
the humble, because they do for the loue of
me renounce their owne honour, and esti-
mation, so greatly esteemed of in the world.
I do vpon good cause bestow a most noble
Crowne vpon the humble in heauen, for
that whiles they liued on earth, they tooke
the crowne from their owne head, and
layd it at my feet.

3. Before I came downe from heauen
into the earth, I was most particularly af-
fected to Humility, & therefore I chose an
humble Mother: & I was no sooner borne,
then that I began to exercise Humility by
deeds. For when as I was the Lord of glory,
I became a seruant, & subiected my selfe to
men: and in proceffe of tyme I did set vp a
school^e

schoole of Humility, and such as resorted vnto it, I informed by deeds & by wordes to Humility vntill my dying day. In like manner my Disciples made a profession of Humility. And this is the cause, wherefore I had a perpetuall warre with Pride, for so much as I euer hated Pride, the capitall & sworn enemy to Humility, which I so tenderly loued. And sith the matter standeth thus, let euery one that is wise, iudge whether it be conuenient, that there should in Religion, that is in my Family, any proud religious man haue place, or that it were fitting that a proud scholer should be admitted and receyued into the schoole of Humility. Hence it is, that some Religious do not go forwards in spirit, because they be not exercised in the booke of Humility, which is the foundation of spirituall life, neither do study to imitate me, who am their Master. It little profiteth the scholler to frequent the schooles, if he follow not his booke, nor exercise himselfe in those things that be taught in the schoole.

4. There be many amongst the Religious, who of theselues confesse, that they be sinners, carelesse, dull, slouthfull, and nothing at al: but if any other should say so much of them, they are eftsouens troubled,

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moued, & murmure for the matter, & letke
to defend their own estimation & honour:
and these men are far from Humility. For
a man in words to confesse himselfe to be
nothing, and yet in hart to hold himselfe
for something, is false and counterfeit Hu-
mility. And to haue a desire to be esteemed
of others, is notable arrogancy. But the
greater gifts an humble man hath, the more
doth he abase himselfe before others.

¶ 5. Desirest thou to know, my Sonne,
what Humility worketh in a Religious
man? First it inclyneth his mind to thinke
submissiuely of himselfe: secondly, when
need is, it moueth him to manifest his own
vility & basenes, euen by outward action.
Hethat is lowly in his talke, going, con-
uersation, and other his actions, declareth
himselfe to be a contemner of himselfe.
Moreouer, true Humility causeth a Religi-
ous man to endure with patience and ioy to
be contemned of others, & causeth further
that he be not only not troubled thereby
or murmure, but also that he most hartily
giue his Creatour thanks therefore, for as
much as he knoweth, that by so doing he is
the more likned to me his Lord & master.
True Humility also inclineth to the shun-
ning of humane prayles, and to the attri-
buting

bating of all that is good, vnto God. Moreouer the Religions, who laboureth to the height of perfect Humility, must needs desire, that he be contemned of all, and further with, that all may be throughly perswaded, that himselfe is truly worthy to be contemned of all.

6. Sonne, if in Religion thou art ashamed of an old, or patcht garment, or doest not with any willingnes exercise thy selfe in abiect offices, it is a signe, that thou doest not serue vnder Humilitties Colours, but art addicted to thy owne iudgment, and wilhest to be much esteemed of others. If thou hold on this way, thou wilt soone repent thy selfe. He that deuoyd of vertue, seeketh to be reckoned off, for that alone sheweth himselfe blame worthy. The religious man, who hunteth after credit and reputation with the world, liueth in miserable state. Moreouer thou louest Humility, or louest it not. If thou louest it not, thou shalt neuer be a cittizen of Heaue, the gate whereof, because it is narrow and strait, receyueh not men proud minded. And if thou louest Humility truly, wherefore contemnest thou an old garment, and to be contemned of others? What other thing is it to be contemned, then for a man

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to exercise himself in Humility, to converse with it, & by the benefit thereof to make a spirituall gaine? If thou louest it, as thou bearest me in hand to do, thou shouldst be glad when any such occasion presenteth it selfe. No merchant is discontented, when any occasion offereth it selfe of traffique to his gayne.

7. Who art thou, which wouldest not be contemned? Art thou greater then I who am the sonne of God? Thou art not: & yet I was contemned of a most vile and base people, and most iniuriously handled by them. Art thou not borne in sinne? Art thou not a sacke of earth, full of infinit miseries? Wherefore then art thou moued and angry, if any one lay thy basenesse before thyne eyes; and who thou art, which thou shouldest confesse thy selfe? What doth it, wretch, auayle thee to haue left the world if in Religion thou continuest to be proud? O blindness! when thou wert in the darcknes of the world, thou thoughtst pride of life to be meer and damnable vanity, and thou conceyuedst honour and estimation with men to be a childish thing: and now in the light of Religion thou apprehendest the same for thinges of great worth, and of singular regard. Is it not a signe of a good sight,

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sight, when a man seeth better in darcknes, then in the cleare light.

8. Know thou for certaine, that he cannot be a good Religious man, who hun-
reth after commendations from men. Ney-
ther is any Religious man humble, who ac-
knowledgeth not himselfe contemptible,
and wisheth not to be so held and reputed
of others. And this is so certayne, as if any
thinke otherwise, he beguileth himselfe:
yea I say more, if it should be for the good
of peace, and for Gods glory, whether a re-
ligious man were contemned, or prayed
and esteemed, he should conformably to
the law of perfect Humility, with contēpt
rather then honour, to be deemed rather a
foole then wise, because by that meanes he
is made more like to me. And this Humili-
ty greatly pleaseth me.

9. All do not rightly examine the mo-
mers of thinges, or make an vpright esteem
of them, and therefore my Prophet sayd to
good purpose: The children of men are
liars in ballances. Many there be, who for
their Humility be of no weight at all or
very little in the ballances of the world, be-
cause they be held for base and counterfait
mettall, and those very men be of iust and
perfect weight in my ballance. For men

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measure all thinges by the outward shew, but I cast myne eyes vpon the inward, and vpon that which lieth hid in the mind. And therefore many are of men cōdemned as vile, and reiectēd as little profitable, who notwithstanding be for many respects in my sight to be preferred before others, and for their Humility do, as precious stones, thinne beautifull in myne eyes.

10. The world onely esteemeth the rich & mighty, who hauing receiued their stipend of pride, are esstoones puffed vp beyond themselues, and do fill all things with their insolencies, and lostynes of mind. And these, though disturbers of peace, do meruailously please the world. But the humble and peaceable please me, whome I so much esteem, that I haue a particuler care of them. And worthily, because there is not a vertue of more regard with me, then is that of Humility: and more then that, no vertue is pleasing to me, that is not founded in Humility. Heauen gates had not beene opened to my Mother, who was euer most deare vnto me, if (notwithstanding her virginity and excellent purity) she had appeared without Humility. One may get into heauē without virginity, but without Humility none at all. And because, when

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8. Know thou for certaine, that he cannot be a good Religious man, who hunneth after commendations from men. Neither is any Religious man humble, who acknowledgeth not himselfe contemptible, and wisheth not to be so held and reputed of others. And this is so certayne, as if any thinke otherwise, he beguileth himselfe: yea I say more, if it should be for the good of peace, and for Gods glory, whether a religious man were contemned, or prayed and esteemed, he should conformably to the law of perfect Humility, with contempt rather then honour, to be deemed rather a foole then wise, because by that meanes he is made more like to me. And this Humility greatly pleaseth me.

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she lyued vpon earth, the most of all praised
 sed Humility; and though she were the
 Mother of God, and the Queene of heauen,
 yet she called and reputed her selfe an hand-
 mayd, she merited not only to haue a place
 in heauen, but also to be exalted aboue all
 the quires of Angells.

11. There be some Religious, who
 complaine that they find not that tranqui-
 lity and peace of mind, which they had in
 their first entring into Religion: but if they
 search out the cause, they will impute the
 fault to themselves. The cause of their dis-
 quiet is the defect and want of Humility.
 The humble hath peace with God, he hath
 peace with men, he hath peace with him-
 selfe, and which is more commendable, he
 hath peace with his aduersary. For none
 may without breach of peace deale with a
 proud person, but the humble. Yea the
 proud himselfe esteemeth highly of Humi-
 lity, because, least he may otherwhiles be
 contemned, or ill dealt withall, he conerth
 his pride and lofitynes of mind with the
 cloke of Humility. Sonne, hast thou a will
 to liue a quiet life? Shake off pride: for if
 troubled the peace of Angells in Heauen,
 how much more will it disquiet men on
 earth?

12. Lord seeing thou hast created man for the obtrayning the glory of heauē which thou art thy selfe, and hast bound him to seeke so noble an end, whither nature also inclineth him; it seemeth nothing conuenient, that he should not humble himselfe, yea and abase himselfe so far, as he should contemne himselfe, and repute himselfe for nothing. True it is, Sonne, that man was created to a most excellent end, but we are to see & consider, by what meanes we must come therto: and therefore they who haue raised vp their throne too neere heauen, haue byn miserably thrown down into hel. For as the Wiseman sayth: Who maketh of another mans house his owne, seeketh ruine. Wherefore if thou desire to be rayfed to glory, wherunto thou art created, thou shalt not vse any either more secure, or more commodious way and meanes for the attayning therof, then if thou practise Humility. This way held I, this way followed the Apostles, in this walked all the blessed in heauen. He that shall take another way, shall surely misse of his marke.

13. Sonne, suffer not thy selfe to be beguiled: attend now to the exercise of Humility, which of hūble persons maketh Angels; as contrarise, Pride of men ma-

keth Dinells. Other vertues take away particuler vices, that be the cause of some finnes only, but Humility taketh away Pride, which is the roote and head of all sins. Humility causeth, that the humble are dearly beloued, & acceptable to all. True it is that I make no great reckoning, when the Religious man doth humble himselfe to those who yeald him honour & respect, for that is easy and done of all. But I hold it for a great matter, if he also submit himselfe to them, who afflict & persecute him. It is not a thing worthy of great prayse, if a man humble himselfe to others in his aduersities, or whiles he is in great necessity & distresse, but that he be humble whiles all matters succeed, and prosper well with him.

14. There was neuer any Religious man yet, who hath not wished the vertue of humility, but al do not possesse the same, because all do not labour for it as it deserueth, nor vse the best meanes for the compassing therof. How is it possible for thee to get Humility, if thou neuer, or seldome vse the company of the Humble, when thou well knowest, that examples worke greater effects, then do words? How canst thou be humble, if thou seldome humble thy selfe, sith the habits of vertues cannot

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be had without frequented acts? Sonne, hast thou a desire of true Humility? Then lay before thine eyes thy own defects, and busy thy mind rather in examining those things that be wanting vnto thee, then in those that be in thee; for an humble person concealeth his own good to himselfe. It helpeth also often to call to remembrance, that thou art to dye. O how many haue there been more noble and more honorable then thou art, who be now nothing but dust & ashes, which thou shalt also be ere long. It profiteth to contemne the dignity and honours of the world, and to hold them for meere vanities, as they be indeed. It is good for them who be in place of dignity, not to glory or be puffed vp, but to feare a fall, for that it is not so great a pleasure to climb high, as it is dolorfull, and hurtfull to fall downe againe.

15. Sonne, hast thou a desire to make an experiment of thine owne Humility? Thou shalt know it thus. It is proper to the humble to thinne their owne prayes, as it is a manifest signe of pride to seeke them. The humble is sory to heare himselfe praised, and the proud reioyceth at it. The more excellent gifts the humble hath, the more carefully he concealeth them, thin-

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king himselfe vnworthy of them : and he earnestly desireth that they should be attributed to God, and that himselfe be reputed vile, and contemptible. The humble giveth place to all, & serueth all, as well his inferiours and Superiours. The humble conuerseeth willingly with persons of the meanest condition.

16. Sonne, wishest thou for the tyme to come to know, how much thou hast profited in Humility? Consider the crowns that Humility presenteth her followers: for she is wont to giue three crownes to the humble. The first, and that which is of the lowest price is, when a man truly, and in his hart thinketh himselfe worthy to be contemned. The second is of greater price, when he beareth the contemning of himselfe with patience. The third, and richest crowne is, when he is glad he is contemned and loueth him who contemneth him. And now consider, which of these three crowns thou hast deserued.

Of a Religious mans Loue towards God.

CHAP. II.

SONNE, Charity is a fruit-bearing plant, which the deeper roote it taketh in

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in the Religious mans hart, the sweeter fruite it bringeth forth. Two branches do spring therout; the one mounteth upwards, and imbraceth God, the other boweth downewards, & imbraceth the neighbour: it imbraceth thee with both for the saving of thy soule. For thou by louing God and thy neighbour, louest and gaynest thy selfe, euen as by hating God and thy neighbour thou hatest and vndoest thy self: Of louing ones selfe much, there is a special commaundment, as there is of louing God and our neighbour: for he who loueth God & his neighbour, loueth himselfe. Of these two branches dependeth the whole Law, yea they be a short summary of all that is written, eyther by the Prophets, or Evangelists. Charity is sayd to be a celestial vertue, and that not without cause, because amongst the Theologicall vertues, that only mounteth vp to heaven, whereas other vertues only enioy the fruits, but Charity enioyeth both the fruit and tree togeather. Charity hath a different effect from Humi- For this being founded in the knowledge of mans basenes & misery, so far depresseth and humbleth a man, as it causeth him to esteeme himselfe for nothing at all: but charity relying vpon the maicesty of the in-

created goodnes, raiseth a man vp to heauen, and maketh him to enter into the very bosome of his Creatour, the Ocean of infinit goodnes.

2. My Scripture mentioneth many prayes of Charity, thereby to induce all to loue it. One while it is called the Band of Perfection, because it so strongly bindeth mans will with me, as we become as it were one, for that is proper to loue, to transforme him who loueth, into the beloued, & this is the greatest perfection that a man can haue in this life. Another while it calleth it the life of sayth, the forme of all vertues, the prime fruit of the holy Ghost, and (to comprehend all the praises of it together in a word) it sayth, that God himselfe is Charity, and he that is in Charity, is in God, and God in him. And what excellency is to be compared with God? What more security is there, then to be in God? and what greater pleasure can a man haue, then to haue God with him. Charity worketh great matters in a man that is possessed of it, as contrarywise, when a man is without it, he sustaineth great detriments and hurts, and occasion is given him of many and sore falls. When the soule is by death separated from the body, life instantly lea-

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hath a man, and all the beauty of the body is gone: euen so charity is no sooner dead in a man, then that the spirituall life cealeth, the actions of life euermore faile, and the spirituall seemelynes so pleasing vnto me, perisbeth cleane away. Without Charity I acknowledge none for my friend, neither be any vertues pleasing to me, if Charity hath not ordered them. If a man speake the language of all nations, and should haue the knowledge of all sciences, and yet be without Charity, it doth him no good. And though he should giue all that he hath to the poore, and yet shall not haue Charity, it profiteth nothing. And if a man should deliuer his body so as it may burne, if Charity be wanting, it is nothing.

3. Go to, tell me thou, who in Religion hast no regard or esteeme of Charity, what will it profit thee to haue renounced the world, and to haue left all that thou didst possesse therein, to haue giuen ouer all pleasures of the flesh, and to liue in subiection and command of another, if thou be without Charity? Dost thou peradventure thinke, that all this is said of secular persons, and not of Religious? Thou art deccyued: yea thy payne and punishment shall be so much the greater, sith for this end I
haue

haue called thee to religion, that disrobed of the worlds cloathing, thou mightst clad thy selfe all ouer with charity. But if thou now hast so little regard to attend vpon my table in thy wedding garment, know thou, that to thine owne hurt, thou art one day to be thrust down into vtter darknes for the same. If the fire that I brought down with me from heauen, be not conserued in Religion, where will it be kept? If Religious be not amongst the first who warme themselves with it, who will be? To stand nearest to the fire, & not to receyue the heate thereof, is a bad signe. It doth not a little displease me, to see a secular man set on fire with the loue of God, and a Religious man to freeze for cold. If a secular man exceed a Religious in store of merits, because he shall haue exercised more acts of Charity, it manifesteth that a Religious man is worthy of great reprehension.

4. Sonne, thou hast an obligation of louing me much, not in regard I haue made and framed the world for thee, or for that I haue giuen thee thy being, and whatsoever thou hast in this life, or els for that I haue deliuered thee from the seruitude of the Diuell, and from the perills & miseries of the world; but for that I haue tendred thee

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thee with so great loue vntill this present
houre. Loue is the first and greatest bene-
fit of all, that hath beene conferred vpon
thee. For that I made the world for thee
& thy sake, proceeded from the fountaine
of loue: that I suffered and dyed to saue thee,
loue was the cause: that I drew thee out of
the stormes and miseryes of this world, loue
alone effected it. And wilt thou not deeme
it for a singular fauour, that I the Lord of
glory, and King of maiesty, haue preuented
thee, a poore worme of the earth, with my
loue, without any one desert of thyne?
What necessity moued me, or what vtility
and profit drew me to cast my loue vpon
thee? And therefore needs must thou be
more hard then the flint, if by me preuen-
ted with so louing a gift, thou louest me
not againe.

5. Lord, if I were to repay thee any
thing, that by right ought first of all to be
myne: for it is impossible, that I should
render thee any thing correspondent to thy
loue. When thou createdst me, thou gauest
me to my selfe: when thou redemedst me,
thou gauest thy selfe for me, and gauest me
to my selfe againe. If then, because thou
createdst me, I owe my selfe all vnto thee,
what shall I giue thee for repaying and re-
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storing me lost and vndone? What shall I giue for thee, for hauing been offred vp for me: and if I were able to giue my selfe euery moment a thousand tymes for thee, what am I compared with thee? And therefore I sincerely confesse and acknowledge, that I am indebted vnto thee so much the more, the more noble, and more deseruing thou art, then I.

6. Lord, if it be true, as it is most true, that my soule, body, life, works, and whatsoever good I haue in this wold, be al thyne, and that I am for a thousand respects bound vnto thee; I ought to cōfesse, that I acknowledge nothing in me to be myne owne but imperfections, defects, and sinnes. But I should be most iniurious vnto thee, if I requitall of my loue to thee for thy loue, I should offer them vnto thee, which be not only nothing pleasing vnto thee, but thou also extremely hatest, as contrary to thy holy will, and desire.

7. So it is, Sonne, but yet something there is in thee, that is thyne, & to me most acceptable, and that is thy loue, which thou canst & maist vse at thy pleasure, first thou art Lord and owner therof. For this is not only pleasing vnto me, but also maketh all thy actions acceptable to me, and
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more then that, nothing can content me,
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meet it is, that sith I first haue loued thee,
thou againe loue me, seeing loue cannot be
requited but with loue againe. And though
I had done no more for thee, the that I made
thee worthy of my loue, this one benefit
alone should haue beene inough to haue set
a frozen hart on fire with the loue of
me.

8. It is true, Lord. O my soule, if thou
shouldest not be set on fire with Charity in
this glowing-boate, and diuine fornace of
the loue of my Sauour, I know not who
will deliuer thee from the euerlasting free-
zing cold? What father, or friend hath euer
loved me, as hath my Redeemer? He hath
not loued me with the loue of seeking his
owne commodity, but with a sincere loue
because he had euer a regard to my saluatiō,
and not to any profit of his owne. For
when he was blessed in himselfe, and was
adored of the Angells in heauen, he came
downe into the world for me, and became
my brother and friend, and dranke vp the
bitter cup of his passion, that he might deli-
uer me from death euerlasting: wherefore
let me loue him, and though I cannot loue
him with an infinit loue, as he deserueth,
sith

sith he is infinitely good, yea and goodnesse in himselfe, yet let me at least loue him with all my hart. He is to be loued of me, as my father, and a most clement father, as a most munificent giuer of all that I haue, as my most compassionate comforter in all my distresses, as a most diligent steward and procuratour in all my necessities, as a most abundant and liberall rewarder of all my good workes, sith neither eye hath seen, nor vnderstanding of man can conceyue what God hath prepared in heauen for them that loue him. If he at any tyme chastizeth vs, we must loue him the more affectuously for it: for punishments inflicted of loue hurt not. Every one who chastizeth is not an enemy, as neither euery one is a friend that forgiueth. Wherfore seeing, euen when he punisheth, he is an amiable Father and a Father of mercies, it is to be thought that if he do it, he doth it for our good.

9. O my soule, not to loue God, as he is to be loued, is not to loue him at all. He ought to be loued respectfully, not for the good or euill he can or may do vs in this or the other life, but for himselfe: and all other things are to be loued in him, and for him. He must be loued strongly, for Charity putteth away all vayne feare, and mis-

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nistrength ability, & courage to overcome all difficultyes, and to beare all aduersities patiently. He is to be loued with all the hart, with all the soule, with all the mind, and with all the forces. And to loue with all the actions inward and outward, is to loue wisely, sweetly, feruently, and continually. He is to be loued aboue all thinges, and so we shall loue him, if we prefer him before all creatures, if we would choose rather to dye a thousand deaths, then to offend him by one mortall sinne.

10. Sonne, not all that thinke they loue me, do so: neither all who thinke they intertaine Charity at home, do it. Charity being the queene of all vertues, entreth into no mans house, vnles be she intertayned as a Queene, neither stayeth she therein, vnles he receyue her as a Queene, and honour her for such. Moreouer I am to be loued, not by words, but in deeds, and my will is that loue be manifested by workes, and not by the tongue alone. How dost thou loue me, if thou seldome thinkest of me, & when thou thinkest of me, thou dost it only by the way passing, & in a languishing manner? This is not to loue with all thy hart, nor with all thy mind. How dost thou loue me, when whole dayes, weeks, and

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monethspasse, that thou speakest neither of me, nor of any thing appertayning to me, nor dost not willingly heare them who treat of good matters?

11. Loue, that vp within the breast, can neither forbear to speake of me, nor stop the eares from hearing men talke of me: and how canst thou with truth affirme that thou louest me, if thou attend not to those things, that I speake vnto thee in thy hart? Or if thou be attentiu, wherfore dost thou not regard them? Who loueth truly, suffereth not any word of the beloued to fall in vaine out of his mouth, but layeth them vp within his hart in store, and there diligently examineth them and reflecteth vpon them. How dost thou loue me, if when thou art able, thou dost it not, or givest not with a ready mind, when any thing is asked or demaunded of thee for the loue of me? It is not hard for a true louer to repay lesse loue to the beloued, who hath giuen him his hart before, & more then that himselfe also. How louest thou me, if thou wilt not suffer any incommodity for my sake, nor expose thyselfe to any danger? Who loueth from the hart, will not sticke to dye for his beloued.

12. How canst thou say, thou louest me,

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me, if in obseruing my commaundements thou findest so great difficulty, and art so negligent, as thou mayst seeme not to keep them, but forced, and against thy will? Loue may not endure delay, neither is it disgusted at all, but doth with great alacrity the will of the beloued. How can it be, that thou louest me with al thy soule, when thou art so greatly deuoted to thyn owne estimation, and to other tryfling thinges, that agree very little with my will? He that loueth another besides me, and not for me, either loueth me not at all, or loueth me not as he should. How canst thou asseuer, that thou louest me, if thou neither loue, nor respect thy Superiours, as they deserue, who supply my place, when as I haue plainly declared, that the honour, or contempt, that is done to them, is done to me? He loueth not truly, who conformeth not himselfe to his beloued.

Of the Religious mans Charity to his Neighbour.

CHAP. III.

S O N N E, thou shalt find some in the world, who desire not, that any honour be giuen them: thou shalt find those, who

refuse dignities, and honours, thou shalt find also those, who receyue not the gifts, fauours, or presents that others giue vnto them, but thou shalt not find him, who desireth not to be loued of others, especially with due and respectiue loue, which for that it causeth vnto the beloued neither suspicion, nor disgust, is wont naturally to please. Many loue their neighbour, but they know not how to loue, and therefore their loue is otherwhiles fruitles, as also hurtfull. I gaue a commandment of louing thy Neighbour, and declared the manner of louing him. If thou loue thy Neighbour, because he is thy kinsman, or friend, or because he is thy Countryman, thou dost nothing, this is not Charity tending to Heauen, but naturall loue, creeping vpon the earth, and common to Infidells, and Barbarians. If thou loue him for any commodity or gayne that thou receyuest of him, or hopest from him, thou louest thy selfe, not thy Neighbour, and this is called Loue of Concupiscence, neither is it of any longer continuance, then is the profit hoped for thereby. To loue our Neighbour for our owne commodity, is not Charity, but rather merchandize.

2. Charity truly effecteth, that the Neighbour

Neighbour be loued, because he is created
to my likeness, and is capable of euerlasting
blisse. True Charity disposeth, that our
Neighbour beloued for God, and in God,
and he that loveth after this manner, lo-
ueth all, the poore equally with the rich,
the nobly borne, and the ignoble, he im-
braceth all, and wisheth them life euerla-
sting. He loveth them as well in tyme of
aduersity, as of prosperity: for he who cea-
seth to loue his Neighbour, in tyme of ne-
cessity, manifesteth plainly, that he loveth
him not for me. All this I vnderstood,
when I commaunded a man to loue his
Neighbour as himselfe, that is, that thou
shouldest wish vnto him, what thou wishest
to thy selfe. And as thou must loue thy selfe
in God, and for God by obeying his law on
earth, that thou mayst afterwards haue thy
reward in heauen: so oughtest thou to loue
thy Neighbour, as capable of the same bea-
ritude with thee. O if the Religious would
obserue this manner of louing their Neigh-
bour, there would not be seene so many
partialities in Religions and Churches.

3. Some be loued most of all, because
they are learned, and kind, others because
they be rich, and in grace, others because
they are gentlemen, or of noble blood, and
those

those that be not such, they regard not. O fraud, & deceit! What hath Charity cōmon with learning and riches? as if a man that is not rich, or learned, or well apparelled were not to be loued? Charity hath in the first place an eye to me, and for that cause loueth all in me. But there is another misery more to be pittied, that some do therefore loue others, because they haue the same complexjon of nature, and of bloud with them. This is not Charity, but a carnall affection, an enemy to true Charity. Charity dilateth it selfe far more wide: for it extendeth it selfe to all, because all be created to eternall glory, and all be ransomed with my bloud.

4. Sonne do not put thy selfe in danger, both of hurting thee, and of offending me, and therefore regard not the complexion and inclination of bloud: if thou do, vnder the pretence of Charity, thou wilt foster sensuality, which will soone deceiue thee, and will draw thee, and not thou it, into a place, out of which thou shalt not find meanes of getting out againe. Though the whole Euangelicall law be myne, because I made it, yet did I particularly name that of *louing the Neighbour*, my commaundment, to giue thee to vnderstand, how pleasing to

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me was the sincere loue of the Neighbour. I would also that Charity should be the badge and cognisance, whereby my Disciples were to be knowne, in so much as ther should not be any of my schoole, or of my sheep, who loueth not his Neighbour, as himselfe. Charity also is a signe of loue, that a man carryeth towards me.

5. Thou art deceiued, my Sonne, if by not loning thy Neighbour, thou thinkest thou mayst loue me. He that loueth not him whome he seeth (sayd my beloued Disciple) how shall he loue him, whome he seeth not? It is true indeed, that the loue towards God the creatour, must go in the first place, out of which the loue to the Neighbour may rise; but it is true with all, that the loue of the Creatour is conserued by the loue of the Neighbour, and therefore if this languish, that must needs faint with all. Many thinke they are my friends, and yet are not, for the malice and little good will they carry to their Neighbours. I am not a friend 'of an hard and peruerse hart. Not to loue, is a signe of a fierce mind, but to hate is an argument of a wicked & cruel hart. Loue if thou wilt be loued, and loue all, if thou desire to haue me for thy companion; for that if thou except but one from
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thy Charity, thou shalt also thrust me out of thy hart with him. If thou being Religious, wilt not loue one, because he hath offended thee in some thing, what difference will there be betweene thee, and a secular man, who followeth the vanity of the world? My disciples did not so, who neither hated, nor hurt, by the least word those who had iniured them, but were very glad, if they had at any tyme occasion of suffering any thing for the glory of my name.

6. By what example canst thou be more stirred vp. to loue thy Neighbour, then by that of my heauenly Father, who notwithstanding he had receyued most frequent and grievous iniuries at the worlds hands, did neuertheles carry so tender affection towards it, as he gaue his only begotten sonne for it. And what did not I, being made Man, for my Neighbours, whiles I spent my whole life to do them good? Whiles I liued, I was their guide, and companion, and I spared no trauayle or paynes at all, that I might shew them the right way to heauen. And more then that, I layd vpon myne owne shoulders all their debts, that were obnoxious to the diuine Iustice, for which dying vpon the Crosse, I
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satisfied for all. Neither was there here an end of my singular loue to my Neighbour. For at what time I was to depart out of this life to my Father of heauen, I left my self in the Sacrament of the Altar, both that I might be mans meate, and that I might vnite my selfe vnto him, and be euer with him: and also, that he being strengthened by the vertue thereof, might one day mount vpon high, where he might for euer enioy those heauenly goods wherto he was created.

7. By this euery one may iudge, whether the Religious, who be inuited to be perfect, as my father of heauen is, and who make profession of imitating me their master, ought by their very works to loue their Neighbours, and to help them in all they be able. Let it be considered and weighed, whether those Religious be worthy of my loue, who take no care of louing their Neighbour, or els in regard of some very little incommodities, which they feare, neglect to help them, who craue their assistance. Let it be examined, whether the iniuries, hurts, and trespasses done them be any fit cause of not louing, or not helping them, when as I suffered many far greater iniuries, and yet did not for that withdraw

my loue, but spent my life and bloud to do them good. All a Religious mans spiritual gayne (who cannot patiently put vp iniuries, and therefore will not do his Neighbour good) is conuerted into his own hurt. For the iniury is damageable to him, who doth another hurt, and auaylable to him to whome it is done, if he beare it with patience. If then the iniury giueth a Religious man occasion of meriting, he hath in truth no cause to be greatly moued against him, who offereth the iniury. I neuer deliuered such kind of doctrine, I neuer gaue my selfe an example in that kind, but alwayes taught, that good was to be rendred for euill.

8. Sonne, remember that thy selfe and all thy forefathers do take their beginning from one, that is from *Adam*, and for that cause be bound to loue one another, as brethren. Call to memory my Apostle his wordes, when he sayth: You are my members, and therefore there ought to raigne that loue amongst vs, that is amongst the members of one body. And by this thou mayst manifestly vnderstand, whether thou louest thy Neighbour truly or no. He that either little regardeth his Neighbour, or contemneth him, though in degree neuer so far inferiour

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inferiour to himselfe, hath not true Charity. Neither the head, nor the eyes, which be the more noble members of man, doe ever contemne the feet, though they be inferiour members, and lesse noble. He that is lory for his Neighbours good, or is glad of his hurt, sheweth that he loveth him not, for that one member either suffereth, or reioyceth in company with another. Charity deemeth the Neighbours either good, or ill, as proper to it selfe. He that out of enuy and malice either extenuateth, or traduceth the actions of his Neighbour, loveth not me. It was neuer scene, that the hands would hurt the feet. He that assisteth not his Neighbour, in what he is able, hath not Charity. The eyes neuer refuse to yeald vnto the other members the office of seeing. True Charity though it be preiudiced and hurt, is not moued to indignation, neither practiseth it reueng, but helpeth the Neighbour, and excuseth his fault.

Of the Religious mans gratitude towards God, for the benefits he hath receyned.

CHAP. IIII.

TELL me, Sonne, what Father or Mother euer did as much to their children

as

as I haue done to the Religious? And what Sonne hath euer receaued so much from his Progenitor, as haue the Religious from me their Creatour and Lord? Benefits looke not the name of benefits, for that they be common to many, neither doth their obligation cease, because many haue their share and parts therein. I haue created thee, and made thee to myne owne image. And if, as meet it is, thou wouldst consider & weigh this, it would be inough to bind thee infinitely vnto me. For by creating thee of nothing, I gaue thee not whatsoeuer nature & being, but a nature very noble, indewed with reason, free, and a commaunder of all creatures vnder heauen: yea I haue made thee chief and Lord on earth, and haue subiected to thy commaund the fowles of the ayre, the beasts of the earth, and all other things created. And though all this be a very great benefit, yet if it be compared with the end wherunto I haue created thee, it is none at all. Wherefore know thou, that I haue created thee to a most noble, and a most excellent end, then which there is not any greater, nor can be in the world, which is for all eternity to enioy the sight of the diuine maiesty in heauen.

2. Dost thou desire to see, my Sonne,
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how exceeding great the benefit of Creation is, which is the foundation of all the other? Go to, tell me, if thou wert destitute of both hands and feet, what wouldst thou not giue to haue them? and if thou wert dumbe or blind, what wouldest thou not bestow for the recovering of both those faculties againe? Thou wouldest questionles giue the whole world, if it were thynce, & thou wouldest rather lead a most poore life with the vse of those members and senses, then to be a king on earth without them. And heerehence thou mayst conceyue the greatnes of the benefit of thy creation, by which thou hast receyued a body, together with all the members and senses thereof, a soule also together with all the faculties, and life, with all things necessary therunto. Thou canst not be ignorant, that by the greatnes of the benefit, an estimate, or gesse must be made of the greatnes of the obligation.

3. Consider thou now, how much thou art bound vnto thy Creatour for this benefit alone, imparted vnto thee without any deseruing on thy part at all. Consider, how thou shouldest shew thy selfe very vngratefull, if thou shouldest not imploy thy life, thy health, the forces of thy body, and
whatsoeuer

whatsoever thou halt, towards the seruice of thy benefactor. Consider, how grievous a sinne it is to abuse the senses, and other the facultyes of the mind, to the offence and contempt of him, who hath graciously bestowed all those thinges vpon thee. And if the cryme of ingratitude be so odious and great in secular men, how great will it be in Religious persons, who haue receaued greater light from me, and are obliged vnto me for many more respects? O how exact an accompt be the vthankfull Religious to make, who not reflecting vpon the greatnes of this benefit, do either quite forget, or little regard it. And what meruaile that the vngratefull do not in this life receaue new benefits, but be sometymes bereaued of those they haue already receaued. Ingratitude driueth away the Benefactor, euen as gratitude inuiceth him to bestow greater benefits.

4. What I did after this for the conseruing of thee, is not inferior to the aforesayd, neither bind thee lesse vnto me. I ordained, that all creatures should serue thee, some wherof serue for necessity, some for recreation, some also for exercising both of body and mind. The heauens go their circle for thee, whatsoever the sea and earth

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bring forth, it is for thy vse. I haue ordain-
ed the Angells, so excellent creatures, to
guard thee. Neither doth any cogitation
seeme to presse me more, then of doing thee
good in all thinges, in so much as it may
be truly sayd, that thou art the end & scope
of all this vniuerse, sith all is created for
thee, and prepared for thy vse and seruice.
If thou aske me now, for what cause I haue
prolonged thy life till this very houre,
when as I haue dealt otherwise with many
both yonger and stronger then thou art;
certaine it is, that I haue not delayed it,
that thou shouldest hold on to offend me by
persisting in thyne owne ingratitude, but
that thou shouldest rather amend thy man-
ners, and indeed shew thy selfe gratefull to
me, thy Benefactour?

5. And all this I did for thee without
any thy labour, paynes, or trouble. But for
the redeeming of thee, & for the deliuering
of thee out of the miserable captivity of
sinne, what did I not? When I was the
sonne of God, and in supreme veneration
of all the court of heauen, for the sauing of
thy soule I came downe from heauen into
earth, became man, and subiecting my selfe
to the infirmities of man, I began to endure
exceeding great paynes, and trauayles for
thy

thy sake. How many miseries did I sustaine, how many calumniationes did I suffer, what abundance of teares, and bloud did I shed for thee? And more then that, I dyed, that I might deliuer thee from death euerylasting, and free thee from the cruell tyranny of the Diuell. See, Sonne, how deare a price I payed for thee. See, how by all right thou art not thyne owne, but myne. And know thou, that the benefit of thy redemption, though it be common to al men, is not yet communicated to all, neither do all enioy the fruites thereof, because all haue not receiued the light of faith, by help wherof they may acknowledg & know the way how to come vnto me. And because thou art one of those, who haue receaued very great benefits at my hands, as hauing beene borne within the bosome of holy Church, and illuminated with my grace, and light from heauen; see thou be not ingrate, but vse thy receyued gifts, least thou be deprived of thy felicity. He that seeth snares, and when he may auoyd them, putteth himselfe rashely into them, meriteth to be punished: euen as he, who seeth not the snare, is worthy of compassion, if he be vpon the sodaine caught therein.

6. I haue againe gone further with others

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others in bestowing benefits vpon them, as with those, whome I haue calied to a more high and more perfect state, and receyued into the number of my most deare friends, with whome I conuerse far more familiarly then with others: & these be the Religious, whose obligation is greater, then thou conceyuest, sith there is not a moment of their life, that receyueth not a new increase of one benefit or other. And if thou wilt consider the matter well, they began to enjoy a benefit, before they were borne into the world. Doth it not seeme a benefit vnto thee, that I from all eternity haue without any their merit, out of my fatherly loue cast myne eyes vpon them, to enrich them with my heauenly gifts? And haue not I, since the tyme they were borne, had againe a peculiar sollicitude and care of them? With how much patience haue I borne with their imperfections? What meanes & wayes haue I vsed to draw them out of this deceiuing world, and to bring them into the best way? From how many finnes haue I preserued them, one while by taking away the occasion of sinning, another while by giuing them hart and courage to shake off tentations, at another tyme by auerting their desires from hurtfull things. And
Y now,

now, what Law commaundeth, or permit-
teth, that euill should be rendred for good?
What wild beast is so cruell, that would go
about to hurt his Benefactour? If ingra-
titude alone be worse then a wild beast, be-
cause it repayeth the Benefactour with ill;
if the forgetting of benefits be a thing infam-
ous, and worthy of reprehension, what
will it be to offend the Benefactour? There
haue beene scene many Religious, who at
the tyme of their death haue much lamen-
ted their owne ingratitude, and haue made
a firme purpose, that, if it should be their
hap to recouer, they would be most thank-
full, and would be most diligent in seruing
of God heere after. But these men became
wise, when it was too late.

7. Sonne, hast thou a desire to auoyd
the detestable cryme of Ingratitude? Then
differre not thy good purpose, but begin
euen now to answere thy receyued benefits:
for this is to be grateful. He is grateful, who
is as much afraid to offend his benefactour
in the least thing, as he is of death it selfe.
He is gratefull, who imployeth his life,
health, strength, body, and whatsoeuer be-
sides to his benefactors honour and glory.
He is gratefull, who is diligent in his de-
uotions, and in all his actions seeketh to

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accomodate and conforme himselfe to the diuine will. Contrariwise, that Religious man is vngratefull, who carryeth not himselfe towards his Religion, as towards his mother and mistresse. The Religious that respecteth not his Superiours, neither yeal- deth them fit honour and reuerence, as vnto my substituts, is vngratefull. And no lesse is he, who prayeth not deuoutly for his benefactors, by whose help, meanes, and industry I prouide necessaryes for the inter- tainment of the Religious. Finally grate- full is he, who desireth to shew himselfe gratefull in all thinges.

Of Patience, necessary in a Religious man.

CHAP. V.

S O N N E, sith this life is the vnhappy ba- nishment of *Adams* children, a man can- not passe it ouer without much trouble and many afflictions: and therefore my Church calleth it the *Vale of Teares*, because there is not any state therein, nor any place in which there is not occasion of lamentation. Let a man make an election of whatsoeuer state he liketh best, and let him haue al temporal goods and contentments at will, yet he shal not want troubles, miseryes, and disgusts,

and whence he least expecteth, thence will molestations, and afflictions come vpon him. For to excoell in dealing, to abound in riches, to haue the fauour of all, to commaund others, do not exempt and free a man from this banishment, and vale of teares: and therefore as long as a man liueth, there is not wanting matter of sorrowing. All haue a will to fly from the Crosse, but it hideth not it selfe from any, neither is there one only Crosse in this life, but they are infinite. No place, no tyme, no state is without aduersities, and therefore better it is to seeke a remedy against them, then to fly from them. Some, while they put one Crosse by, do fall into another greater then the former, & where they thought to haue found quiet of mind, they find perturbations and troubles both of mind and body. The only, and present remedy of all these calamities is Patience, which preuaileth not by flying away, but by resisting.

2. And for the vnderstanding of the office of Patience, thou must know, that of the contrary accidents that befall men in the banishment of this life, there ariseth in a mans mind so great an heauines and grief, as it obscureth reason, and troubleth the mind. And as a feuer in the sicke hindreth the

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the actions of the body, so doth sorrow disturb & hinder not only the good actions of the mind, but further openeth the gate to many inordinate desires and sinnes. And for this cause it is written of the Wiseman: Sorrow hath killed many, not only by a corporall death, but by a spirituall also. And Patience is a vertue, that tempering & moderating the grief and heavynes, that is occasioned by tribulations, conserueth and armeth Reason that she be not put from her standing, and ouerthrown by the inordinate desires and passions of the mind. And this is nothing els, then to stop the entrance against many errors and defaults, that befall whils the mind is vnquiet, and the Reason troubled. And therefore in my Scripture it is sayd, that Patience hath a perpetuall work, for that when the sorrow, & grief of mind is once moderated, all the hatred, indignation, reuenge, and other the euills which are wont to rise of those perturbations, are the more easily diuerted, and put by. And when the Reason is once free from all perturbations, it hapneth, that a man executeth the workes of vertue after an entiere & perfect manner. Hence it is, that some call Patience the keeper and conseruer of vertues, and not without cause. For vertue

cannot exercise their power, when Reason is troubled, and the mind disquieted, and therefore they need the help of Patience, that keepeth the reason free from perturbation, and the mind from disquiet, & consequently the vertues be conserued also. The house that hath not one within to keep it, is easily spoyled.

3. For to cure the descases of this present life, there be vsed three kinds of Antidots. The first is that which the Phisitians prescribe, and this doth not alwayes cure or help, yea sometymes it hurteth. For the Phisitians often find not the cause of the sicknes, and therefore they cannot well apply any cure vnto it. The second is prayer, whereby recourse is made to the heauenly Phisitian, who as most wise, hath a perfect knowledg of all discaies, and being omnipotent, is of power to take them away in an instant. And this medicine, though it doth euer good, doth not for all that restore the health at all tymes. For the heauenly Phisitian euer prescribeth a remedy, that is expedient for the sicke person, but corporall health is not euer good for the sicke, & therefore God doth not at all tymes giue it him. The third Antidote is Patiēce, which alwayes cureth, being healthfull both to
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body and soule, and helpeth not the sicke alone, but the standers by also for the good example that is given them. And this third Antidote is so proper to Religion, as the Religious, who either make little esteeme thereof, or vse it not, be alwayes sore sicke. The sicknes and infirmity is euill inough, when the mind is disquieted by impatience.

4. Sonne, what is the cause, when any thing befallcth troublesome vnto thee in Religion, when some great labour is to be yndertaken, or aduersity to be borne, thou doest not vse Patience, but art troubled, murmurest, and afflicted? Hast thou not giuen ouer the world to suffer aduersityes for the loue of me? Hast thou not resolved with thy selfe to endure all thinges, though sore and painefull, for the good of thy soule? Whence is it then, that when any occasion offereth it selfe of accomplishing thy soppious desires, thou resistest the same, and art troubled? Cast thyne eye a while vpon me, and tell me, what sinne I did commit in the world? Whom I offended all my life long? and yet from the tyme that I came into the world, I euer suffered something, & swallowed downe many a bitter morsell for thy sake. How many contumelies were forged
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against me, how many iniuries were done to me? which yet I endured patiently, to giue thee an example of liuing conformably to thy vocation. And that thou hast now a will to practise Patience in bearing reproaches with a contented mind, is a thing, that becometh not a man of the world, much lesse a Religious man, who hath made profession of vertue, and of imitating me, who did euer embrace Patience in so affectuous a manner.

5. Lord, I would very willingly endure all things, for loue of thee: but when I see some to persecute me vniustly & wrongfully, I cannot away with it, and therefore am troubled and grieved. Thou art deceived, Sonne, if thou thinkest, thou hast any iust occasion of being troubled. Tell me, was not I wrongfully persecuted? Did not I put vp and digest false accusations, and testimonies against my selfe? Was I therefore troubled? Or did I make my complaint? And how many Religious be there already crowned in heauen, who suffered sore persecutions whiles they liued on earth? If the bad and wicked should not iniure and persecute any, the good should not haue so exceeding store of merits: To suffer wrongfully, is the crowne of Patience. But if
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thou suffer iustly, that is, for thyne owne finnes, it is rather a iust punishment, then any vertue of Patience. sith Patience beareth and putteth vp iniuries for the loue of me. And therefore my Scripture pronounceth them for blessed, that suffer persecuti- on, but yet for Iustice. Iniury to him, who putteth it vp patiently, is a gaine, and to him, that doth it, a sinne and losse.

6. There be some Religious, that punish themselves diuers wayes, some by fa- stings, others by wearing of haire-cloth, & by disciplining themselves, which they suf- fer both willingly & patiently. But when the same are imposed vpon them by Superiours, they fall to murmuring, & are trou- bled, and if they performe them, they do it against their wills, with a repugnance of mind, and so they loose all their merit. And are they not manifestly, besides the offence it selfe, deceived herein? Tell me, I pray thee for what end thou shouldest punish thy bo- dy so cruelly, and with so great patience? Is it not to please me? If it be so, thou shouldest with a greater readines, and more pa- tience receiue and performe the pennance inioyned thee by thy Superiours, for then thou shouldst do a worke far more pleasing vnto me: for thou shouldest exercise three

most excellent vertues at once, namely, Humility, Patience, and Obedience. He that punisheth himselfe only out of his owne will, seldome becometh perfect.

7. O how much do the men of this world confound the Religious, who are the children of light? For most of them carryed away, either by ambition, couetousnes, or some other bad desire, spare not to take any paynes, suffer molestations, and put themselues into whatsoeuer perills for the satisfying of their vayne desires: and should not a Religious man patiently suffer some tribulation for loue of me, and for the good of his owne soule? He that loueth not, is afraid to suffer. And more then this, the ambitious and couetous man if he suffer any incommodity at any tyme, is very carefull, that grief and heauines oppresse him not, or discourage him in the continuing of his negotiation, that he hath begon, but with a stout courage seeketh diuers and sundry wayes, and meanes, for the repaying of his losses againe. But some Religious vpon the very least crosse, and trouble, suffer themselues to be much disquieted in mind, and are so sore moued vpon the very least word, as they loose from thenceforth all the fruit of the rest of their works. My

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Apostles did not so, who went their wayes reioycing, that they were held worthy to suffer contumely for the glory of my name. And the Martyrs endured most cruell torments with so great cheerfulness of mind, as some, who were by Tyrants commaunded to go barefooted into the fire, did thinke themselves in doing it, to walke vpon roses.

§. That a secular man suffereth iniuries & aduersities with an impatient mind is nothing to be meruayled, sith he thinketh himselfe to be the maister of his owne honour and estimation, because he did neuer renounce them, as do the Religious: and therefore no meruayle, though being injured, he be moued. Againe, a secular man, because he hath neuer put himselfe vnder the commaund of a Superiour, thinketh himselfe to be wholly his owne man, and to rely vpon himselfe, and therefore he cannot be much offensive vnto others, if he cannot with Patience put vp a disgrace, or digest a contumely. But that a Religious man, who hath openly made profession of renouncing all his owne honour and estimation, should take the iniury, that were done him impatiently, is a thing vnworthy his estate. And more then this, the Religious

ous being deliuered ouer to me, is no more his owne, but myne, and dependeth wholly and all in all of me, & therefore it may not seeme hard to any, if he be sometyme reproached, or be tryed by sicknes, or any other calamity. My seruant must only haue care to serue me: but how he ought to serue me, either this way or that, that care he must leaue to me. I can vse his seruice, even when he lieth fast tyed to his bed, or when any other persecutiō is raiſed against him. For some serue me more perfectly, while they are sicke in their beds, or otherwise punished, then when they be in best health, & free from all aduersity. The Religious man is neuer a whit lesse regarded of me for his defects of body, but for his impatience; and other indispositions of his mind.

9. There be many Religious, who while they pray, thinke themselues of ability, patiently & constantly for loue of me to suffer all kind of torments, and to spend their bloud for me, and to dye martyrs: but within a while after, if they be but touched with a little word, or something be commaunded them that is accompanied with some trouble and payne, they knit their browes, & can hardly forbear (which

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worke) euen in the presence of others to
speake forth into words, & gestures of im-
patience. He that accustometh not himselfe
to beare with little things, will neuer with
patience away with great and hard mat-
ters. Sonne, hast thou a will and desire to
become a Martyr without the sword; and
without shedding of thy blood for it? Con-
tinue and keep thy mind in patience,

*of Meeknes, that ought to be practised
by Religious men.*

CHAP. VI.

S O N N E, learne of me, for that I am
mecke & humble of hart. Meeknes was
the first vertue, that I taught in my Schoole;
and thereunto I exhorted my Disciples: for
it is both an easy and healthfull meanes for
the purchasing of the rest of the vertues. For
whereas it is the office of Meeknes to main-
tayne the peace of mind against the force of
anger, it causeth that the mind exerciseth
vertue, without any difficulty. And whils
it also defendeth the body against the in-
ordinate passions, it maketh the body a fit
instrument for the obeying of the soule in
the purchasing of vertues. And therefore the
Religious, who taketh no great paynes in
attayning

attayning Meeknes, is not truly one of my Schoole, and more then that, stoppeth vpon the entrance against vertue, and Religion perfection.

2. There is not any so vnciuill & barbarous, who if he do but consider the beauty, excellency, and propertyes of the vertue of Meeknes, would not extoll, and be in loue with it. Sonne, hast thou a desire to vnderstand, how noble a vertue Meeknes is. Compare it with the contrary vice, namely with the intemperance of anger, which is bound to obey the reason of man, as to her Mistresse whose handmayd she is. For it is obey not reason, but go before it (as it ordinarily hapneth) it so distracteth the faculties of the mind, and troubleth the angered person, as he may seeme to differ nothing from a foole and mad man, & from a beast possessed by the Diuell.

3. Anger, when it once getteth possession, and command of the mind, first of all it effecteth, that the angred person remembereth neither God, nor his own conscience. It depriveth the mind of all iudgment, that is, of the eye of the mind, whence blinded it is driuen into sundry errorrs and falls. In the body it taketh away the equall temper and good proportion of humors, and giueth

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cause to sundry diseases. Moreover it hurteth our Neighbours for the bad example. To be short an angry mans life is most unhappy, not only because none willingly createth with him, but also for that he will haue all things done after his owne manner, a thing that cannot be endured. Whereupon when a thing is not done according to his mind, or he hath sustayned hurt in something, or hath receiued some iniury, he estoones breaketh forth into flat rayling and railing speeches, threatneth reueng, and sometymes also by his intemperance of mind turneth his fury and rage vpon himselfe.

4. Meeknes remedieth all these euils, whose nature, and first office is to moderate and stay the intemperance of anger, and to restraine all other perturbations, arising of it. First of all therefore it represseth, and mitigatesh the violence & fury of anger: next it draweth the appetite of reueng to the rule of right reason, for as much as in the angry it is wont to transgresse and goe beyond the bounds of moderatiō. Meeknes in like manner conserueth all the facultyes of the mind, every one in his order, and causeth them to do their owne functions. Finally it reduceth the whole man to quiet
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and maketh him fir, not only to acknow-
ledge his Creatour, but also to converse in
familiar manner with him. And this gift
was peculiar to Moyſes for his ſingular
Meekneſſe.

5. Neither doth the force and efficacy
of Meekneſſe ſtay heere, but it extendeth
it ſelfe further to the qualification and mode-
rating of the anger of the Neighbours, ſo
that one benigne and gentle and were, or one
meeke action is enough to appeaſe the fury
of any enraged beaſt, to ſay nothing of a
man incenſed to anger. But (a thing much
more to be regarded) Meekneſſe is of ſo great
excellency and authority, as it mounteth up
to heaue, and ſtill the anger of Gods iuſtice
and obtrayneth the pardon of moſt grie-
uous finnes. Woe to him, who reſiſteth an
angry man, more mighty then himſelfe.

6. Moreover the life of the Mecke is
moſt happy, becauſe it is moſt acceptable
not only to me his Lord, but alſo to all his
Neighbours. Hence it is, that every one
willingly uſeth the company of the Mecke,
and all deſire to gratify him. Conſider
therefore, Sonne, how profitable and plea-
ſing the vertue of Meekneſſe is, and conſider
thou, whether it be not convenient, that
thou ſhouldeſt loue it, and labour with all
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diligence to make thy felicitie possessed of it. Neither let it seeme any painefull matter vnto thee to straine against the inclination of nature, prone and propense to choller: for it is proper to a Religious man to restrain his passions, to mortify his senses, & to intertaine his inward peace of mind. But aduise, that Meeknes had nothing of all this, yet this one thing should moue thee to vse all diligence for the obtayning of meeknes, for that it maketh a Religious man like vnto me, his Lord and Maister. Againe, is not all paine well taken in procuring that vertue, that is no lesse pleasing to me, then it is profitable to the Religious himselfe? Not for him to be Religious, but to be indewed with vertue, maketh him like to his Lord, and Maister. And for the leading of a quiet & peaceable life, it is not enough to haue forsaken the world, but a man needeth further to bridle anger, and the passions therof. Sonne, thinke not, because thou art Religious, that thou art free from the darts of thine enemyes, because the Diuell taketh more paines in overthrowing of one seruant of myne, then of many secular persons. The same enemyes also, that is, the passions and perturbations of the mind, when they

be not mortified, do giue the Religious very sore woundes, and therefore they need a strong and sure buckler, for the receiuing of so many of the enemyes blows. And this shield is Meeknes, which no enemyes force can possibly breake, but goeth away with the victory by receiuing their blowes thereon. It causeth the Mecke also in all his aduersityes and crosses to place great confidence in me, and therefore while he continueth with a stout & vndaunted courage, he doth not easily giue way, nor in prosperity please himselfe ouermuch: and this is, to hold the place of a shield not only in the tyme of warre, but of peace also. A Tartar getteth profit of him, who holdeth it fast, but he that easily suffereth it to be stricken out of his hands, is presently wounded. And so is it with Meeknes, that defendeth him, who holdeth it fast, and will not let it go.

8. Sonne, remember, that thou hast bidden a farewell to the world, that thou mightst rid thy selfe of the dangers of the snares of it, and consecrate thy selfe wholly to a spirituall life, and to my service: but if thou be not Mecke, thou canst obtrayne neither. For if thou shalt in Religion be subject to anger and wrath, thou wilt easily therein contend also with others, and

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for thou canst not but be troubled and dis-
quieted. But if thou shalt be Mecke, thou
wilt not haue contention with any, and
with thy gentle and milde answers, thou
shalt appease those, that haue a will to con-
tend. Meeknes also helpeth, that thou mayst
be affected to spirituall and heavenly mat-
ters, which do then set a man on fire with
the desire of them, when they are well co-
sidered and lookt into. But anger, when it
troubleth the mind, leaueth no place for
reason: but Meeknes, when it hath quieted
the mind, thrusteth out darknes, and bring-
eth light in place for the vnderstanding of
spirituall things, which being entred, the
vnderstanding presenteth vnto the wilke
embracing of that, which it knoweth. *M*
ing. Amongst the Euingellicall beati-
tude I haue assigned the second place next af-
ter Pouertry of spirit, to Meeknes, and for
theroward I added the Land of the liuing,
which is the heavenly countrey, where the
Mecke shall inioy my presence for all euer-
my and as I was heere in this life their
Maister, and an example of Meeknes, so will
I be their hire and reward in heaven. I
shewed my selfe a meek lambe for the loue
of men, and a lambe is a figure of me, and
therfore meet it is, that all those, who haue

sorted vnder this signe or banner, namely of Meeknes, and become lambes for my sake, should reioyce with me in heauen for euer.

How it becometh a Religious man to be Mecke and milde, and how vnbeseeming it is for him to be angry, is a hard thing to be vnderstood. The Religious state is peaceable and quiet, quite estranged from the spirit of indignation and contention. In all things it conformeth itself to the Diuine will, it neuer complaineth nor murmureth for any thing, it liueth contented with it owne, and taketh all that happeneth in good part. These and other conditions, seeing they be the fruit of Meeknes, cannot stand without it. Contrariwise, where the excess of anger reigneth, nothing is heard but threatnings, iniuries, clamours, and lowd outcries, reuenge, and blasphemyes against God, his Saints in heauen, & all his creatures, which are at the commaundment of the wrathfull person, whose actions, because they haue their origen not of reason, but of fury, are neither good, nor can possibly haue any good end. How then is it possible, that wrath can haue any community with religion, which is a certaine quiet Schoole

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of perfection, governed by the spirit of Meeknes? How can a Religious man attend to prayer, molested with the passion of anger? How can he be an help and example to his Neighbour, who because of his impotency of anger, cannot haue any power ouer himselfe? Sonne, thy nature is not the nature of a serpent, but of a man: but if it accustome it selfe to anger, it will become so furious, as like a venomd serpent, it will wound thee with the sting.

Of Mortification, necessary for a Religious man.

CHAP. VII.

Sonne, the kingdome of heauen suffereth violence, and the violent only carry it away. If thou thinke, that heauen may be won by giuing thy selfe to idlenes and ease, by pampering thy body, and by yeilding vnto thy senses their pleasures in every kind, thou art greatly deceiued. For this is not the ladder, whereby thou must mount vp to heauen, neither be these the armes, and weapons, wherewith thou must fight, and ouercome, but thou must offer violence to thy selfe, by mortifying the desires of the senses, and by resisting the flesh,

as often as it seeketh and desireth after those things, that haue no coherence, or correspondence with the constitutions of thy religious Institute. This is the way, that bringeth to heauen. And though thou mightst come to heauen without any contention with thy flesh going before, and without suffering of any tribulations, yet thou must neither desire, nor wish it. For I the sonne of God, did not ascend into heauen, before I had suffered much, neither would I go thither, but by the way of tribulation.

2. A Religious man therefore, if he resolve to win the kingdome of heauen, must needs take vpon him so much strength, as he may seeme to fight for three: for he, that shall not fight for three, shall not go away with the victory. First he must fight as a man: for seeing he ought to lead a life, correspondent to his nature, that is participant of reason, he is also bound to liue according to reason, which he cannot be able to do, vnlesse he make warre against his senses, which oftentimes resist their maisters reason, & seeke to free themselves from the gouernement therof. And Mortification is that, which subiecting the sense to reason, causeth that a Religious man

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contayne himselfe, and live within the bounds of vpright reason.

3. Secondly, he must fight, as a Christian, by the sword of Mortification, cutting off all that is forbidden by the Christian law. And therefore he must not only abstaine from rapine, from killing of men, from fornication, & the like, but also from a will of doing them, because the one and the other is prohibited by my law. And herein thou must needs exercise a certaine violence, & mortification. For seeing man in regard of concupiscence and his depraved nature, is prone to the euill, by me forbidden, if he take not into his hand the sword of my law, and with it cut off, or put to flight, whatsoeuer is contrary or repugnant to the law, it will neither be possible for him to triumph in heauen, nor on earth defend and maintaine the honour of a true Christian. Thirdly, he must fight, as a Religious man, who as he is bound to many more thinges, then a Christian secular man, so hath he more and greater difficultyes, and therefore must be the more bestir himselfe, and fortify himselfe with the armes of Mortification, & fight more manfully with the enemy.

4. That a Religious man may mortify

his senses to liue conformably to reason, it is good, but for the auoyding of falling into sinne, it is better to the accomplishing of the precepts of my law. But if he further bindeth himselfe to follow perfection together with obseruation of the counsailes of pouerty, chastity, and obedience, it is best of all: for that so doing he doth not only abstaine from all things vnlawfull, but for loue of me he also depriueth himselfe of many lawfull and good things, as of the dominion of temporall goods, of marriage, of the gouernement of himselfe, and all that is his, and the like. Here hence it followeth, that a Religious man ought to be so mortified, as he must be separated cleane from all creatures, yea and from himselfe also, and must haue his dependance on me alone. And this is to beare away heauen by mayne force. Sonne, he that conuerteth his eyes vpon the labours, and paynes that be in this combat, will thinke them to be many and great: but he that casteth his eyes vp to heaue, easily perceiueth, that they are not worthy of the future glory, that is there prepared for vs.

5. Mortification is nothing els, then a spirituall death, that depriueth a Religious man of all the life of his senses, and effeminate

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ate desires, & cutteth the cleane off, with all the bad acts arising of the sensual life: even as the death of body taketh away all the forces of the naturall life, and the actions therof. Wherefore that Religious man is truly mortified, who is dead to his owne loue. He that is dead to himselfe, is dead to the desires of the senses, and leaueth a life conforme to the state of his Religion; that maketh him Religious, and spiritual. The spirit may not continue life, if the sensuality be not first dead.

6. There be some Religious, who mortify themselves in some one thing, and not in another. Mortification, if it be not whole, & vniuersall in all things, nothing pleaseth me, because there is no being, nor entrance for the spirit, where all sensuality is not taken away. The bird, that is tyed with many bands, is not free, & at liberry, nor can fly her way, if there be but one thrid, that holdeth her fast by the legge. One defect may hinder a Religious man from ariuing to the height of perfection. Neither do those Religious lesse displease me, who begin indeed to mortify themselves, but vpon the very least inducement of the senses, or terrified by their owne slouthfulnes, continue it not. Mortification

that continueth not to the very end of his
looseth the reward. The victory is not
gotten at the beginning of the fight, but at
the end thereof.

7. Others there be, who thinke they
discharge their duty, when they mortifie
their passions, and bad inclinations so far
as publicquely, and in the sight of others
they do nothing, that may not beseeme
them. But this is not Religious mortifica-
tion, for that such perturbations and mo-
tions of the mind be not truly mortified
but are only couered ouer, that their bran-
ches may not come to light and be seene.
He that draweth not out the roote of the
imperfections cleane, if it spring not forth
to day, it will to morrow: and the Reli-
gious man will sooner giue ouer to cut off
the peruerse branches, then will the roote
to put them forth. Those Religious are
very acceptable vnto me, who do not only
cut off all outward bad workes, but do fur-
ther endeaour by contrary acts to roote
out the bad habits, and their inordinate af-
fections, which be the rootes, and foun-
taines of imperfection. And this is true
Mortification, which taketh away the bad
actions together, with their beginnings.
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8. Sonne, I know right well, that this continuall warre betweene the flesh and spirit, and betweene the sense and reason, is very sore and troublesome vnto thee, but thou must know, that a man was not created with this discord. Neither was there this state in the terrestriall paradise, where when as the sense was obedient to reason, and man to his Creatour, there was exceeding great peace and concord; & sinne after that had stirred vp the inferiour part against the superiour, brake this peace. And if thou desire to be reduced, and to returne to this first peacable state, Mortification is to thee necessary, the office whereof is againe to bring the body in subiection to the seruice of the spirit, the lawfull Soueraigne, and the senses vnder the commaund of reason: for this is the way of renewing the peace. For the reducing of two souldiers, that be at variance, & do in hostile manner persecute the one the other, necessary it is to peace & amity, that the one yeald to the other, the inferiour to the superiour: and therefore it is necessary, that the body yeald to the spirit, sith it is a subiect to the spirit.

9. O how will doth that Religious mā vnderstand the manner of his own vocation, who

who practiseth no true mortification, his experience plainly teacheth, that where Mortification is not, there sensuality beareth sway. And what profitable fruit can grow from such a roote? What good can Religious men do, that abaseth himselfe to the desires of men of the world? Of the many evils, that Sensuality produceth, this is one, that it is neuer quiet, vnill it haue drawne a Religious man into extreme misery both of body and soule. Contrariwise Mortification, forcing the passions to keep themselues within their own bands, greatly helpeth the Religious man towards the attayning of the perfection of vertues. For as it is impossible to come to perfection without vertues, so is it as impossible to compasse true vertues, without Mortification.

10. Lord, all that thou hast hitherto sayd, is most true, but sith there is in man so great a multitude and variety of inordinate desires, so many vnruely passions, so great a company of bad inclinations, how is it possible for a poore Religious man to resist so many contraryes? When shall he euer be able to tame so many wild and vnruely beasts? A man needeth to stand both day and night armed with a two-edged

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word in his hand. And for this cause no
paruell, though some Religious be found
not to mortify themselves in all things, and
others againe not to perseuer in the carnall
study of Mortification.

11. Sonne, thou peradventure thinkest
thy selfe the first of them, who haue giuen
themselves to exercise mortification. Many
indeed haue gone before thee, who haue
laboured manfully and gloriously in mor-
tifying themselves in this life, who now
enjoy the fruit of mortification in heaue. And
there liue many in Religion at this day gi-
uen to mortification, wherein they perse-
uer not without their owne merit, and with
great ioy to me. Neither must it seeme
strange, or hard vnto thee to be continually
in armes. For is this life, as my seruant iah-
well sayd, be a certaine continual warfare
on earth, what other thing is it to liue, than
to be euer in warres, and to fight without
ceasing? When a City is besieged, if the
cōemy giue continuall assault day & night
for the taking of it, necessary it is for the be-
sieged to be continually also in armes for
their listing of him. If then thou meane to
defend and keep the City of thy soule,
which is day & night molested by passions
that be the enemyes therof, it greatly impor-
teth

306 (.III.) *The Mirrour of* *Religi*
rest thee day and night to be at defiance
with them, and to fight against them. And
it for the gayning of some fortification
adventure with the hazarding of the
liues, wherefore should thy paynes of Mor
tification seeme hard vnto thee, for the gay
ning and winning of the castle of heauen
wherein thou shalt triumph for eternitie.
Thou shewest thy selfe ouer delicate. The
souldiar, that is afrayd of paynes, soon
fainteth and looseth courage. *modi gaini*
but 2. Neither must thou be terrifyed
with the multitude and variety of thy con
rary passions: for though thou hast not
forces inough in thy selfe to beare the vio
lent impression of them, yet by the help of
Gods grace, thou shalt be able not onely
mayntaine thy selfe safe from their incur
sions, but also to put them to flight, and to
take away the memory of them within thy
selfe. All Religious haue a desire at the
houre of their death to be found mortified,
and yet but few haue a will to mortify the
selues. If thou shunnest mortification liuing,
how wilt thou be mortified at the end of
thy life, when thou comest to dye? Finally
the reward of Mortification is so excellent,
as a man for the purchasing of it, should not
forbeare to take any manner of paynes,
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to encourage himselfe to the paynes,
that are to be taken in the fight, and to
the victory, thinketh euer and anone vpon
the reward.

Discretion required in a Religious man.

CHAP. VIII.

NOONE, he that vseth not an eauen
payre of ballance, is easily deceaued in
weighing: euen so he, who vseth not dis-
cretion and prudence in his actions, often-
times committeth so great errour, as no re-
medy, or redresse is to be found, in either
helping them, or taking them away. If thou
exceed in chastening thy body, it will be
weakned, lay down his burden, and refuse
to discharge the seruice it oweth to the
soule: againe if thou be ouer remisse in mor-
tifying it, it will eftsoons rebell, and turne
the heels against thee and kicke. For this
cause Discretiō is necessary, which teacheth
how to vse the ballance, and how to keep
them eauen, that the one rise not ouer much
nor the other be let downe too much. And
this is the salt, that must season mans ac-
tions, that they may retaine the commendation
of vertues, and may be pleasing vnto
me.

ms. They oftentimes come sooner to the
pointed race end, who hold on with
moderate pace, then they who run in haste.
For he that hasteth with a moderation
doth neither easily fall, nor is soone wear-
ryed, but he that maketh ouermuch haste,
though he fall not, is yet soone wearied,
so either cometh not at all, or with much
a do to the place, whither he intended.
O how great hurt, especially in Re-
ligion, worketh Indiscretion to the Reli-
gious, who w^e neither direction, nor coun-
saile in doing of penances, and in con-
tinuing a more severe course of life. They
thinke they please me, when they mortify
their bodies ouer much by fastings, disci-
plines, wearing of haire, and watching;
but they are deceiued. For the good that is
done with Discretion, hath the commen-
dation of vertue, & pleaseth me: but what
is done without Discretion, is a vice, and
defectiue, and pleaseth me nothing at all.
This their spirit meritteth not the name of
scrubur, but rather of indiscreet fury: for
as much as within a while they become so
weake in body, as they neither profit the-
selues nor others. He that spurreth his horse
ouer much vpon the way, is forced to stay
in it, & this I iustly permit for a punishment

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thea their pride of indiscretion. For if they
vith would submit themselves to the iudgment
half of their Ghostly Fathers, or Superiours,
tion that they might go the more securely on in
wea the way of spirit, they should neuer preci-
hast pitate theselues into these inconueniences.
ed, & Penance and austerity ought to be such, as
much they may not overthrow, and destroy na-
d. ture, but the vices therof.

Re 3. O how much better might they do,
Reli and more pleasingly vnto me, if their pen-
cou nances & mortification were euer accom-
oni panyed with two noble vertues: with Hu-
The mily, I say, wherby they should submit
trif themselves to the iudgment of their spiri-
tisci tuall Fathers: and Obedience, wherby they
gra might do, what they commaund them. For
at is by the direction of these two vertues, they
ne might the more securely enter into the
wha rough and vneauen way of Penance, and
and might merit much more before God. None
all hath euer been a good guide, and iudge for
e of himselfe.

: for 4. Many of them commit another cr-
ne so lour, who do in the spirituall way rely v-
he- pon their owne iudgment, and that is, that
orfe while they obserue not the meane in mor-
Ray tification of their body, they ordinarily
me are not solicitous about the extirpating of

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the vices of mind. And though they should
not transgresse in any thingels, then that
in the way of spirit they would not be di-
rected by them, whome I haue appointed
to gouerne in my place, should not this de-
fect, arising of Pride, be a most dangerous
vice and fault of the will? Tell me, what
good will it do a Religious man to cha-
stize and punish his body, and in mynd to
interraine his owne will, and inordinate
affections? I omit to say, that such be often-
tymes moued of vayne glory to do those
outward mortifications, that others may
see them, though the same be moderate,
more then to be inward, that are not seen
to men, which yet are not hidden from
myne eyes, and which I greatly esteeme,
because the austerity of life is not in so
great a regard with me, as is the mortifica-
tion of the vices of the mind.

5. Moreouer the hurt, that the indis-
cret do vnto others, is not little; for as
much as they who follow their example,
do also imitate their indiscretion, which is
vicious, and cause of many cuills. Others
again, obseruing the inconueniences, and
the infirmities, that those men fall into,
who were overmuch given to their pen-
nances and mortifications of body, are
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cleane and wholly auerted from those pious
and holy actions, fearing least themselves
also by exercising them, might prejudice
and hurt their owne health. Neither is it
in all, certainly to iudge, that those incom-
modities will not follow of penances,
out of the indiscretion, and pride of them,
who haue refused to be aduised by others.
He that seeketh not to auert the mischief
and hurt, that is preiudiciall to himselfe &
others, shall be punished both for himselfe
and for others.

6. Lord, seeing our flesh is one of our
three capitall enemyes, and so troublesome,
as it molesteth vs, both night and day,
wherefore is it, that thou wilt not haue it
afflicted and punished? I haue heard it said,
that he who maketh ouermuch of his flesh,
doth nourish & intertaine an enemy with-
in his owne house, & giueth him occasion
of raising warre against him. Were it not
therefore a point of wisdom, and better to
make warre vpon it, then that it should first
of all assayle vs? Neither seemeth there any
danger in punishing it ouermuch, or in v-
sing of excessse, sith the Scripture sayth, that
none euer hated his owne flesh.

7. Sonne, my Scripture also saith, that
the seruice done to me, must be reasonable

and discreet, that may not exceed or go beyond the appointed bounds. It is indeed my will, that the flesh be mortified & punished, but yet with moderation. And though thy flesh be an enemy vnto thee, yet thou must remember with all, that it is the soules instrument, and therefore it must be in such sort handled, as it may not rebell against her spirit, and yet may serue the soule in her owne functions. But if thou exceed in punishing it, it will languish, and pyne away, and so it will not be able not only not to serue thee, but it will stand in need of the seruice of others it selfe. He that is to walke well, must shun the extremes.

8. Some are openly tempted of the Diuel to multiply one sinne vpon another, and they be those, ouer whom he vsurpeth a full and absolute commaund. Others againe, because they be not yet caught in his snares, vnder pretence of good he induceth to sinne, as when he proposeth vnto them, that it is good for a Religious man, if he bring his flesh in subiection by long watchings, and other asperities of body, as did the holy Fathers in the wildernes, who be now Saints in heauen, and are honoured in this militant Church for lights of the world. But the crafty enemy proposeth
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not, that those actions should be profitable to the soule, or pleasing to God, or exercised by the rule of Discretion: neither doth he also declare, when the forces of men be not equall, that it is not conuenient for all to vie the same seuerity towards themselves: for what is mediocrity to one, is ouermuch to another. Neither doth he giue to vnderstand, that there needeth the counsell of spiritual Fathers, without which none may with security walke on in the way of spirit. Sonne, seeing the Diuell deceyueth thee by himselfe, if thou wilt not be deceiued by him in thy pennances and deuotions, follow not thine owne head, nor trust thy selfe.

9. Finally, that a Religious man may be discreet in all his actions, it is therefore also conuenient, because he is regular, and reason requireth, that he direct all his actions to a certaine square and rule, & this is to be discreet. And more then all this, a Religious mans actions must be addressed to my glory: but what glory of myne can it be, if the same be vicious and indiscreet? What pleaseth me not, procureth not either honour, or glory. Consider now, Sonne, if indiscretion in fasting, disciplines, and in other good workes of that kind displea-

seth me so greatly, how much thinkest thou will it discontent me, if a Religious man be indiscreet in eating and drinking, in sleeping, and in the like actions, which be not of themselves holy, but indifferent? How much shal he displease me, if he exceed & be indiscreet in actions that be bad in themselves? If indiscretion be ill of it selfe, cōioyned to a bad thing it wil doubtles be worse, and will displease me more.

10. Discretion is necessary as well for Superiours, who gouerne others, as for subiects, who are gouerned. Discretiō, which is the child of beneuolence, teacheth them to be louing, and benigne Fathers, to be compassionate to their subiects, nor to impose heauyer burdens vpon them, then they are able to beare. And it teacheth the subiect to reuerence, honour, respect, & obey their Superiours. O how displeasing a thing is it to me to see a subiect indiscreet towards his Superiour. Indiscretion, because it is crueltyes daughter, and hardnes sister, causeth the subiect to afflict his Superiour, by shewing himselfe froward in obeying, and dissolute in discipline. I know very well, how many fighes and deep groanes of the poore & afflicted Superiours for their subiects hardnes of hart, ascend vp to heauen.

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But woe to them, who shall haue giuen the occasion. The contempt that is done to Superiours, is done to me, and it appertaineth to me to examine and punish it.

Of Indifferency, necessary for a Religious man.

CHAP. IX.

SONNE, thou hast many a tyme and often heard, that Religion is the schoole of perfection, & so it is : and therefore they that enter into Religion, be not perfect, but haue a desire to labour to the perfection of Religious discipline. The scholler, that hath begun to follow his booke, hath nothing els proposed to him, but to learne to speake & write Latin first, & after to passe ouer to the higher Sciences. As touching the meanes, whereby he may come to his sayd end, he sayth not, I wil imprint these rules in my mind, I must be conuersant in this booke, and read it ouer & ouer, I must heare such a lesson : but he is indifferent, & submitteth himself wholly to the iudgmēt of his maister, to read, or heare whatsoeuer shall to him seeme good. If a Religious man doth not the same in the schoole of Religion, he shall neuer write or read wel,

but shall comit many errors in Religious discipline. His only care must now be to aspire to perfection, but about the means proper to Religion, let him be indifferent, and leaue all to the iudgment of his Superiour, whatsoeuer is in that kind to be don, And that Religious man is truly indifferēt, whose will, put as it were into a payre of scales, weigh not more to one part, or thing, then to another, but is ready to do, what the Superiour commaundeth.

2. Indifferency is Resignations daughter, & this cannot be without that. Therefore the Religious man, who is not, touching his owne person, and those things that appertaine vnto him, resigned to my will, & to that of his Superiours who supply my place, neither is, nor can be sayd to be indifferent. O how little is that Religious in grace and fauour with me, who when any thing shall be by his Superiour commaunded him, answereth, that he is ready indeed to obey, yet he had rather do this, or that, & if that be not yealded vnto him, he complaineth, or murmureth, and sometimes also neglecteth to do what is commaunded him. This is no indifferency nor resignation, but is a kind of contract. He that in accepting of obedience yseth this

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But, hath a meaning that his worke should be but very slenderly rewarded. Who sayth, I will do it, but I would, or will, declareth that he is not yet dead to himselfe, nor hath renounced his owne will. In the world, when thou wert thyne owne maister, in dealing with me, didst thou not say, I wil, or I would? and therefore thou hast not yet either left the world, or it hath not left thee. This is no other thing, then to put one foot into two stirrops, and to haue a will to serue two maisters. The world doth not leaue them, who do not first forsake it.

3. Lord, if I be indifferent, and ready to performe all things that shall be commanded me, who shall proue that to me to be better for my soule, and my quiet? Sonne if thou seeke to do that whereunto thyne owne affection swayeth thee, who may secure thee, that it is more expedient for thy soule, and for thy quiet? The good of soules proceedeth from me, and that I communicate to them who are conioyned with the Superiour, whom I haue assigned to gouerne: from whome, if thou, because thou art not indifferent, shalt separate thy selfe, thou shalt deprive thy selfe of all the gifts and graces, which I am accustomed to bestow vpon the subiectes, by

help of the Superiours. Besides, if thou be a true child of obedience, thou oughtst to iudge and thinke that to be best, that thy Superiour, where no sinne is, shall ordaine: & if thou be indifferent, thou art bound promptly to put it in execution. For if any error hap to be committed, it shal neither be thyne, nor imputed vnto thee, neither shalt thou loose any part of thy merit. A good Religious man examineth not, whether it be better, or worse that is commanded, but it is inough to him, if it seeme better to the Superiour.

4. Some there be, who can hardly be induced to make their habitation in that place, where Obedience would appoint them, or to do the busines, that the Superiour iudgeth most conuenient for my glory, and therefore they are troubled, and cannot find any quiet or peace of mind, & they ascribe this their disquiet either to the place, wherein they dwell, or to the company with whom they conuerse, or to the office that they execute, vntill they obtaine some change in them. But that euill is hardly cured, the cause wherof is not vnderstood. This is no fit way of cure, and of remedying it: the origen of the euill is to be sought into, which is an vnmortified passion, proceeding

ceeding of selfe loue. And of this it is, that a Religious man is not indifferent, nor resigned in all thinges to the Superiours wil. Thinkest thou, the place will effect, that thyne inordinate passion, or proper loue may be remoued, and taken away? The change of bed doth not ease the sicke man of his feuer, but doth oftentimes increase it. And though the change somewhat tempereth the heat burning of it for the tyme, yet within a while it tormenteth him more sore. So hapneth it to a Religious man, who carryeth with him the cause of his vnquietnes, and that is his inordinate passion: and vnles the axe of mortification be vsed to the cutting away of this bad roote, whatsoeuer change of place be made, it will euer be worse with him: for the longer the euill hangeth vpon him, the more strength it getteth, and the lesse indifferent it maketh him.

5. But tell me, if after the change of place, or of office, thou find thy selfe as vnquiet, or more then before, as commonly it is wont, what wilt thou doe? Wilt thou wish to remoue to another place? In no case: for that were to play the pilgrim without a staffe, with thyn owne detriment, and the bad example of others. Or wouldst thou
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rather resolute to mortify thy selfe there, & to pull the cause of thy disquiet vp by the roote? But that might be done as well in the place, to which obediēce had sent thee, and had beene done with edification of them, who knew thee to be vnquiet, little mortified, & lesse indifferent. He that hath not the spirit of God, though he should find a place euen among Angels, will not cease to be vnquiet.

6. Others againe are so tyed to one place, as when they vnderstand that the Superiour thinketh on some change, they are tempted, and much troubled: and which is worse, because they thinke themselves in that place, where they then are, to abide with the fruit, & increase of Gods honour and seruice, they censure their Superiours for imprudent, and destitute of zeale. Hence it is, that if they be against their will remoued, and sent away to some other place, they do not well accommodate themselves to any function or office, but do trouble others, and liue very vnquietly and discontentedly themselves. Can it possibly be, that so little a regard should be had of Indifferency, which is a Religious mans crowne? When I called thee to Religion, did I then promise, and vndertake to
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place thee there, where thou wouldst, or where I would? Certes thou dost manifest, that in serving me thou relyest rather vpon thyne owne sense, then my iudgment. O misery! There is not a Religious man, that would not thinke, & also affirme, that it is good, yea and necessary, that my seruants be indifferent and resigned, but when he commeth to action, he findeth a repugnancy. What auayleth it an Horseman to haue a generous and goodly horse, if he be not tractable? What helpeth it to haue a seruant, though he be neuer so excellent, if he suffer not himselfe to be gouerned, neither hath a will to do my will.

7. Tell me, Sonne, is it not good for a Christian to be indifferent in thinges, neither commanded, nor forbidden, and to be ready to do what I shall command him? as to haue children, or not haue any? to be of an healthfull body, or of a sickly? Euen so, for seeing it is vnknowne vnto him, what is best for the good of his soule, there is good reason he should stand to my iudgment. And this is to be indifferent. And if this be true, as it is most true, wherfore dost thou, that art Religious, choose out of thyn owne will to execute this ministry and office rather then that, to dwel in this place rather

rather then in another? How knowest thou, whether this or that be more for thy soules good, quiet, or perfection? He that is not indifferent, maketh the gouernement the more hard, laborious and paynefull. He that is not indifferent, seldome yealdeth to the iudgmēt of the Superiour, but ordinarily is inclined to performe those ministryes, to the exercising wherof he is lesse fit, sith none is a good and impartiall iudge in his owne caule, in regard of an inordinate affectio that deceiueth him. He that is not indifferent, peruerteth the order of right gouernement, for that, whiles he accommodateth not himselfe to his Superiour, as he ought, the Superiour is forced to accommodate himselfe vnto him. He that is not indifferent, can neyther be spirituall, nor deuout, and is ordinarily selfe-willd and heady.

Of Modesty, necessary for a Religious man.

CHAP. X.

SONNE, Religious Modesty is a silent Sermon, but such as penetrateth, and is efficacious, which like vnto a sharppointed arrow, entreth into a mans hart, woundeth it, and worketh wonders therein, and the more

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more deepe wound it giueth, the more plenteous fruit it bringeth forth: & it profiteth not only them, who heare the sermō, but him also who maketh it. For Modesty intertayneth a Religious mans spirit, and maketh him so collected in mind, and present to himselfe, as all his actions breath forth a most sweet sent of deuotion, and is so excellent an ornament to a Religious man, as it maketh him amiable, and most deare to all who shall behold him. Againe inward Modesty, whereof the outward proceedeth, is so pleasing vnto me, as it is a pleasure to me to vse the company therof. And more then this, a Modest Religious person is of so great authority with others, as there is nothing, that he may not perswade them vnto. And if they do so many thinges in regard of a Religious mans Modesty, what is it conuenient for me to do, for whose loue he practised that Modesty? What should he not obtaine at my handes, who is most deare vnto me, and most acceptable?

2. It produceth also wonderful effects in others. There is not any so incompoused, so dissolute, and disordered, who would not at the very sight of a modest Religious man presently collect, and compose himselfe

selfe also to an externall Modesty, thinking he should transgresse the bounds of Modesty, if before a modest Religious man he should not demean himselfe with the like Modesty also. Moreouer Modesty woundeth the hart with a certaine other wound, and that a more healthfull one, and this it sweetly draweth others to deuotion, and to an imitation of good manners; neither giueth ouer, vntill it shall haue drawne them to a composition of the inward man, wherein consisteth the true quiet and peace of mind, then which nothing is more excellent, or more to be wished in this life. For Modesty produceth more plenteous fruit, and profit, preacheth more effectually then doth the tongue. The Religious man is not blamelesse, who shall not by his Modesty preach vnto others.

3. Contrarywise the immodesty of a Religious man woundeth the hart, but the wounding therof doth great hurt, both to him, in whome the immodesty is, and to him, who obserueth it. Who euer saw an immodest, & wandring Religious man spirituall, and deuout? Immodesty goeth euer accompanied with impudency, insolency, and dissolution of manners. And what spirit can there be of deuotion, where

there

there be found vices, so contrary to deuotion? The immodest not only wanteth all authority with others, but also is further a scorne to all: & which is more, obliueth, and (not to say) taketh away the fame and good name of his Religion, that had formerly beene won by the vertue and modesty of others. Moreouer the immodest not only offendeth & scandalizeth others, but also inuited them to dissoluition, especially the men of the world, who are easily induced to thinke that to be very lawfull for them to do, which they see done of Religious men. Now then consider thou, what punishment that Religious man is worthy of, who when he was chosen out to be salt, & the light of the world, for the conseruing of secular men by his example, doth by his loose manners put them forwards, and set them on fire towards all disorder and impudency of life. An immodest Religious person is displeasing to all wise, and spirituall men, who by his bad example be so sore offended, as they are confounded for very shame thereat. And how can such a man be pleasing to me, who serueth me, and dwelleth in my house? It is the glory of a Prince of this world, if he haue a modest, ciuill, and well ordred family: and

contrarywise it redoundeth to his ignominy and shame, if it be loose in manners, & giuen ouer to lasciuiousnes. Euen so, if the Religious, who be of my family, be modest, it redoundeth to my honour & glory: contrariwise it is my reproach & dishonour, if they be immodest.

4. Lord, I haue euer heard, that thou art contented with a mans inward vertue, and with an vpright hart. And if that be true, it cannot be altogether displeasing vnto thee, if a Religious man be not at all tymes outwardly composed in manners, & modest, so his mind be aright & collected. Sonne, if thou thinkest me to be so delighted with the goodnes of the hart, as I regard not the outward conuersation and manners, thou art decciued, because I require both. Though the Religious, who is of a good, and vpright mind, be ordinarily composed also in externall manners, and contrarywise, who is not well composed within, is commonly also dissolute and incomposed without: In like manner a Religious man is bound to giue edification to his neighbour. If he be only composed in mind, he cannot giue edification, because God alone is a beholder of the hart, and not the neighbour: and therefore necessary it is, that

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that he edify with his outward modesty, whereby a ghesse & coniecture is made of the inward modesty, and composition of manners. If then the Religious mans outward manners be not rightly composed, a man shall easily iudge, that the inward man is ill composed also, and so in place of edification he should giue offence, and scandall.

5. There be some Religious men, who indeed make a shew of outward Modesty, but are withall little solicitous about the mortifying of the desires of the mind: but this is not the modesty, that I requyre at a Religious mans hands. For if he desireth to seeme humble and modest, that others may commend him for it, he taketh vpon him the Pharisaicall modesty, which is sold at a good rate to men, but for the basenes of the price, hath no reward at all in heauen. But if he would seeme modest, that he may edify, or at least not scandalize his neighbour, he vseth affected and an inforced modesty, which hath not any long continuance. The modesty contenting me, is that outward composition, and decency of manners, that groweth of the inward composition, by benefit whereof all the desires, and affections of the mind, be

subiect to reason, and at the commaund of it. And this Modesty procureth to a Religious man a certaine venerable seemlynes and authority. This is agreeing to the Religious state, and maketh it worthy the reverence, & respect of secular persons. This Modesty accompanieth a Religious man, both day and night, whether he be in the Church, or at home in his chamber, whether he sleepeth, or speaketh, is in iourney, or doth any thing els.

6. Sonne, desirest thou an easy, but yet an effectuall meanes for the getting of Modesty? Conuerse in my presence and sight, that is, in all thy actions, either secret, or manifest, whether they be done by day, or by night, thinke me to be present, and a beholder of all, as I am indeed; and I doubt not, but thou wilt be ashamed to do any thing vnbecseeming, and vnworthy thy Religious state in my sight, and presence.

Of the Vertue of Prayer.

CHAP. XI.

SONNE, most true is that, which some affirme, that Prayer is to me a sacrifice, to the Diuell a scorge, and to him who prayeth a singular help. And that a sacri-

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sacrifice may be offered vp for an odour of
sweetnes, necessary it is, that it be pleasing
not so much to him who offereth it, as to
him vnto whome it is offered, and therefore
that which may stir thee vp to the desire
of prayer, must be a pure desire of pleasing
me, and not others, nor thy selfe. And
doubtles, that prayer will be most accep-
table to me, if it answere my desire,
though thou shouldest not take any com-
fort thereof at all. The old sacrifices were
made, as I had appointed in my Law, and
they that offered them, did not require of
the ministers any other thing, then that
their sacrifices might be done conformably
to the diuine will. The Diuel doth not so,
but he endeauioureth by diuers and sundry
wayes to hinder this pleasing sacrifice of
Prayer. For one while he exaggerateth the
difficulty therof, that thou mayst giue it
ouer: another tyme he pretendeth that the
tyme is not commodious to do it, that thou
maist put it of: now he feigneth that it
would hurt thy health, that thou mayst
make light of it &c. And no meruaile, be-
cause, as I sayd, Prayer is his scorge, and
therefore he is most of all afraid of it. And
the more he hateth it, the more reckoning
ought a Religious man to make therof, first

it is the spirituall food, wherewith his soule is refreshed, and strengthened.

2. The vertue of Prayer is so pleasing to my Father of heauen, as he commaunded me, to come downe from thence, to deliuer vnto my Disciples a manner and forme of Prayer, wherein he would be named Father, that all might in their necessities with a great confidence repaire vnto him, and both prayse, and reuerence the diuine Goodnes in this holy exercise of Prayer, which is so pleasing vnto him, as he sometymes differeth to impart the grace that is required, and craued therein, that the Prayer may be repeated, and sayd ouer againe. Prayer was also no lesse pleasing vnto me, then it was familiar vnto me, and therefore I recommended it in the Ghospell, and commended it vnto others, not by words only, but by examples and deeds, And when I had no leasure to attend to Prayer by day, by occasion of the paynes of my preaching, and of other works, done for the good of my Neighbours, I spent the night in it.

3. O how sore that Religious man sinneth, and how strait an accompt is he to yeild vp one day vnto God, who eyther doth not bestow the tyme, that is by his Religion

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Religion allowed him for prayer, in that holy exercise, or bestoweth it not in manner as he ought, and might, if he would. And how great a shame is it to see, that whē a signe is giuen to some recreation appertaining to the body, they come running in all hast, and diligence: and when the signe is giuen to Prayer, they come slowly vnto it? If thou dost not performe, or very negligently performe the taske of thy wonted Prayers, dost thou not consider, that thou dost it with the preiudice of other Religious that haue a participation with thy Religion? He that maketh no conscience to deprive his owne soule of the fruit of Prayer, will make lesse conscience to defraud others. If the seruant be not affected to that, which pleaseth his Lord, much lesse will the Lord be affected to that which is pleasing to the seruant.

4. Prayer is nothing els, then a talke, & commerce of a reasonable creature with his Creatour, to whome he confidently proposeth both his owne necessities, and those of others, that as a Father of mercyes he would vouchsafe to assist, & help his children. But those please me much, who being to deale in prayer with their heauenly Father, do inuocate some one of the

Saints, to whome they are deuoted, that they would please also to assist them with their prayers and petitions to God. They also please me, who do not begin to pray, vntill they shall haue craued grace of praying well; as do those also, who craue pardon for their imperfections and sinnes; for as much as this is, wont not a little to help and promote the fruite, and progresse of Prayer. They also do well, who to pray with fruit, do not only exclude the cogitations of all other affayres, that are wont to distract the mind, but also seeke to be well composed, and to vse such a situation of body, as helpeth towards the saying of their prayers both attentiuely, and deuoutly. For seeing Prayer is a sacrifice to God, it is not lawful to pretermite any thing in it, for the best performing thereof.

5. Some obtaine not at Gods hands what they haue craued in prayer, because they craued not what was conuenient. He that asketh what is hurtful, or vnprofitable to the soule; asketh not that is conuenient for it, for as much as in prayer are to be craued thinges good, and profitable for the soule. Thinges indifferent, which may be vsed well or ill, such as be honours, riches, health of body, must be asked with a condition,

tion, if they be good for the soule. Better knoweth the Physitian, then the sicke, what is more necessary for his health, and therefore he doth neuer giue vnto the sick what he demaundeth, but what may do him good. I did not take from my Apostle the sting of the flesh, though by his prayer he had more then once craued it of me, because it profited him more to haue it still. It is best for the Religious, if his soule be filled with merits, rather then that his will should be satisfied. He that is not humble in his prayer, and acknowledgeth not his owne misery, obtayneth not what he craueth, because he asketh not well. Who prayeth not with confidence, so as he firmly belecue, that I am able to satisfy his petitions, obtayneth not grace, because he prayeth not, as he should. He that perseuereth not in prayer, or giueth over his petition once begon, or els goeth forwards after a languishing & cold manner therein, obtayneth nothing, because he asketh not well.

6. There are some others, who so soon as they obtrayne not the grace they craue, giue over their prayer to their owne losse, for as much as I had determined to bestow greater graces vpon them, then they asked

of me, but because they might not endure to be delayed, they lost all. Whiles I differ the bestowing of my grace, and they yet persist and hold on in prayer, their desire of praying waxeth hoater, and hauing obtayned it, they imbrace it, and conserue it with a greater seruour for the tyme to come. Moreover they cōtinue their prayer, which is a good action, & meritorious, & they make themselues the more apt for the receiuing of the desired grace. For whiles they are betwixt hope and feare of receiuing the grace they craue, they examine themselues, whether some secret sinne, or imperfection of theirs may peraduēture be an impediment to the receiuing of such grace; and if they find any such, they become penitent for it, and therby they make themselues the more apt for the receiuing of grace. Be not these diuers and different priuiledges of graces, that I giue, whiles I do not yeald vnto the petitions at the very first? Why then do they giue over their prayer? Many things are obtained of God by occasion of a vehement and continued desire of the thing, which if it should not be, they should not obtaine at all. Therefore as my Scripture sayth: *Better is the end of Prayer, then is the beginning.* For no worke is finished

finished, being but begun, but when it is brought to an end. To one well disposed God knoweth how, & when to giue more then he is able to aske.

7. Others giue ouer their prayer, because they are dry, and find no deuotion in their prayer at all, but this is no good remedy for the matter. If that aridity groweth through thyne owne default, as because thou comest to prayer without any preparation going before, and with an head distracted with many impertinent cogitations, wherfore shouldst thou giue ouer thy prayer for it? Let the cause of thy aridity & distraction be rather remoued & taken away. He that of his owne carelesnes stumbleth vpon a stone, doth not therefore cut off his own foot, because he stumbled without any his owne fault, neither omitteth he for that, to prosecute his iourney, but is more vigilant, that he may stum- ble no more. Neither is prayer to be giuen ouer, when the aridity commeth vpon thee without any thy fault, for as much as I do sometymes of purpose withdraw the grace of consolation, that acknowledging thyne owne insufficiency in thy selfe, thou mayst for the obtaining of feeling, and deuotion in prayer, humble thy selfe, and con- fesse

selfe that it is one of the gifts, which distribute to whome I will, and when please. Besides, tell me, wherefore thou prayest? If it be to please thy selfe, there is no cause, why thou shouldst expect any other reward, because thy payne of praying is acquitted, & that abundantly, with that pleasure, that thou feelest in thy prayer: but if thou prayest to please me, it ought to content thee, that I accept of it at thy hands. He that inuyteth to good cheere, must be contented, if his guests like of it, though himselfe tast not of it at all.

8. There are others, who neglect their prayer, because they be therein molested & troubled with diuers, and importune cogitations, and scruples. He is no good soldier, who turneth his backe and runneth away at the first sound of the Trumpet, or so soone as he commeth in sight of the enemy. What do bad thoughts hurt thee, if they come vpon thee against thy will, neither hast any desire to intertaine them? I am satisfied, if when thou perceiuest and feelest them, thou shakest them off, and if they come againe, thou do the same, and though thou shouldest do nothing els all thy prayer tyme, thou shouldst please me as much, as if thou hadst made thy prayer with

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with greatest attention, and thou shouldst merit more at my hands, then if thou hadst receiued great consolation, and spirituall contentment in thy prayer. A good seruant taketh more pleasure of his Lords comfort, then of his owne, though he thinke that of his Lords to be his. A very good remedy for scruples is, not to weigh them, at all but to haue a purpose only in prayer to prayse & extoll the diuine goodnes. He that regardeth scruples, looseth the fruit of many good workes.

9. Some, because they see not the fruit of their prayer, do make a light reckoning of it, and therefore they contemne the exercising therof, as nothing profiting them: Sonne, it is no good consequence: I make no profit of my prayer, and therefore I do well, not to make any. For if thou dost not profit by it, the fault is thine owne, and not of prayer. For thou mightst, if thou wouldest, make most great profit thereof, for Prayer is a most profitable thing. He that maketh a fire to warme himselfe, and goeth far from it, receiueh no heate at all from it. Prayer is a fire, whereunto if thou shalt forbear to approach, thou shalt neuer be warme, or get any heate.

10. O how do the Religiousmen please
me,

me, who after they haue prayſed me, and with w
done me all honour in their prayers that pray.
they can, do by the benefit of it lead a Reood,
ligious and vertuous life, by abſtayning women
from vice, and imbracing vertue, whercom that Re
they meditated in their prayer. Neyther prayeth
though thou ſhouldeſt find no profit in thy prayeth hi
ſelfe at all, muſt thou therefore leaue of thy ſo ſay
cuſtome of prayer, ſith that hath another that he
fruit and commodity, that inſeparably acood, a
companyeth it, and this is, for that by infor he,
great honour, and glory is giuen to me thy ording
Creatour. Yet a good Religious man muſt alwaye
not ſtay heere, but muſt proceed on to ble, r
workes: for ſo doing he ſhall honour, and haund
content me the more. Therefore he pleaſeth
me not, who though he craue in his praye
er Vertue, doth not afterwards take any
paynes in purchaſing it, namely, by exer-
ciſing ſome actstherot, for this is to tempt
God. For thou muſt not expect all that
from me, which thou art with my help
to do and performe thy ſelfe.

11. Lord, it is ordained and decreed
by thy Law, that we pray alwayes, and
without intermiſſion. And can that be
poſſible, when we muſt needs ſometymes
ſleep, ſometymes eate and drinke, ſome-
tymes deale and trafficke with others &c.
with

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, and with which actions it is impossible for vs
to pray. Son, that Law is not so to be vnder-
stood, as though it were necessary euery
moment to attend actually to prayer. For
that Religious person alwayes prayeth, and
prayeth truly without ceasing, who ma-
neth his prayer at set tymes & houres: he is
so sayd alwayes to pray, who referreth al-
to he doth to Gods glory. Also to lead a
good, and vertuous life, is to pray alwayes.
For he, who euer liueth in all thinges ac-
cording to his vocation, obeying my will,
alwayes prayeth. And this is not impos-
sible, nor very hard, that my Law com-
maundeth.

Of the Vertue of Perseuerance.

C H A P. XII.

S O N N E, all the Angels were created in
Heauen, but all stayed not there. All re-
ceiued many great gifts and benefits togea-
ther with grace, but all conserued it not.
For some not perseuering in that most hap-
py state, fell miserably, and lost all the fa-
uour of God. But those that stood, were
confirmed in grace, and enioyed the priui-
ledge of euerlasting felicity. Who is not
content with his owne state & condition,
liueth

liueth vnquietly, and easily offendeth. The first Parents were formed of earth, but yet in the terrestrial Paradise, where they were enriched with sundry gifts, and especially with that of innocency: but after that, not content with their owne state, they had a desire to be as Gods, knowing both good and ill, and they were not only spoiled of their innocency, but also with their extreme ignominy and hurt thrust out of Paradise, in so much as thereby they brought themselves, and all their posterity into infinite miſeryes. He that aspireth higher, & to more then his state permitteth, forgoeth that iustly, which he had receiued before. O how many Religious perish for want of perseuerance! for they perseuere not, who are not content with their state, & condition, that they haue in Religion, whereunto I called them. And how many of them be for a punishment of their inconstancy and ingratitude found to lead a life in the world, vnworthy of a man? And that worthily befallerh them, because they contented not themselves with their Angelical life in Religion.

2. Perseuerance hath the dependance of constancy, as hath the daughter of the mother. For he that is constant in tolera-

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ing the troubles and trauayles, that be
presented in the exercise of vertues, is sayd
to perseuere in good, and where constancy
faileth, there perseuerance fayleth also.
O how much is inconstancy in good works
unbecoming to a Religious man, who
should worthily be ashamed, euen of the
only thought of inconstancy. And no mer-
e, sith it is also dishonorable to a man
of the world, who yet maketh no pro-
fession of practising vertue, if he once leaue
off the good worke he had formerly be-
gon, sith it is not good to begin a good
worke, and to intermit it, and leaue it
imperfected without iust cause. And
that Religious giueth it ouer to his greater
shame, who leaueth his vocation thought-
lesly, as an inconstancy, when as he is tyed vnto
it by the law of vowes, when he made a
profession of vertue, and from the very in-
stant of his first conuersion, began to la-
bour to perfection. If a blind man, or
one who knoweth not the way, should
goe out of the same, he were worthy of
excuse: but if one illuminated, & by long
instructiō intelligent of the spiritual way,
the Religious be, should stray out of the
right way, and by inconstancy forsake his
former state, what excuse can he pretend

for himselfe? For it cannot be any iust excuse, that he complaineth, that he cannot be at quiet in Religion; and in conclusion is afraid of the perdition of his soule: for as much as by this pretext he seeketh to couer and conceale his owne inconstancy. But he laboureth in vaine, sith he is vnquiet for none other reason, then for that he hath a will to be vnquiet.

3. O how much is this poore man deceived, thinking that he should find more quiet in the world, then he hath in Religion, as though in the world there were no troubles, & crosses, nor greiuous sinnes committed, or that in the world there were more excellent remedyes and meanes for procuring of quiet, and of the soules good, then there be in Religion. It is nothing so, my sonne: but these be meere fanseys of thy, and owne ianglings and decyets of the enemy. He that aspieth to quiet, and constancy in his vocation, which is as it were a certaine pledge of saluation, must be humble. An humble man, if any thing happen hard, or heauy vnto him, sayth: This it is to be a Religious man, neither is he troubled, because he thinketh himselfe worthy to suffer more incommodities, then he doth. Perseuerance also dependeth

on

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on patience, which is the elder sister; without which Perseuerance cannot stand. For if there be not patience in suffering aduersities; Perseuerance ctsloones falleth to the ground, sith it consisteth in enduring troubles, paynes, trauells, & miseries vntill the liues end. Hence it is sayd, that Perseuerance crowneth the works, because it communicateth vnto them their last perfectiō: for that without it they should be imperfect. For he is not happy who doth good, but he who perseuereth in good, neither is a reward granted to him who worketh well, but to him who persisteth in doing good vntill the very end. Many begin well, but all do not end well.

4. Some forbear to perseuere in the exercise of vertue, because they are afraid of the paine. For when they consider that the payne is a sore thing, and very hard, & which they are scarce able to away with, they cast downe their burden, who when they might & were of power to overcome, are neuertheles overcome, and euerthrown by their inconstancy. But Perseuerance telleth this feare, and animateth a man to persist manfully in the exercise of good workes, as much as is requisite. Sonne, if thou desirest to weare the crowne of Perseuerance,

leu rance, thou must shun two extremes thereunto contrary. The one is called Nicenes and ease, which easily yealdeth and turneth the backe for some difficultyes, that occure and present themselves in the exercise of vertue. The other is a pertinacy, and will, that adhereth ouer much to it owne iudgment. But Perseuerance, that keepeth the meane, neither permitteth the good worke once begon, to be hindred by any difficulty, nor to be put off, or differred longer, then reason requireth.

5. Lord, I haue often heard, that Perseuerance in good is thy worke and gift, and that it cannot be had, but by thy benefit, and that thou givest it where, and to whome it best pleaseth thee. And if it be so, they seem free from all fault, as many as perseuere not in a good worke begon, firs they may for excuse of themselves say, that they haue not receiued the gift of Perseuerance. Sonne, it is true, that Perseuerance in good workes is my gift, but yet thou art bound to haue a firme purpose of perseuering in good, as in a thing necessary for thy soules health, and it is in thyne owne power to go against that purpose of thine, or also, with the help of my grace, to keep and continue it. Neither, though

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the gift of Perseuerance cometh from me, oughtest thou therefore to be dismayed: do thou thyn owne part manfully, and I will discharge myne in assisting thee with my grace, where need is.

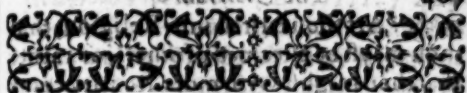
6. Tell me now, my sonne, what there is in Religion, that may make thee afraid of not perseuering? Be they perhaps, the paynes, and troubles that be in Religion? or because all necessaryes of body be not competently afforded thee? But neither these, nor all things els can giue a Religious man iust cause of giuing ouer his good purpose. I did my selfe from the first day of my comming into the world, till my going out of it againe, suffer many and great incommodities: and my labours and paynes still increased with my yeares. And if I moued out of my loue to thee, persisted in carrying my crosse of paynes, and toying till my death, why shouldst not thou for the loue of me perseuere in good, which by my speciall inspiration thou hast chosen? Why shouldst thou without cause abandon that, wherunto thou hast voluntarily tryed thy selfe?

7. Consider, sonne, what sentence is pronounced touching this: That saluation is promised not to the beginners, but

to the persecerant till death. Consider also that it is already defined, that he is not apt for the Kingdom of heauen, who after his hand once put to the plow, looketh behind him. Consider, that the Diuell entreth together with thy will, that he may afterwards bring thee out with his owne. He pretendeth the yoke of Religion to be heauy, that he may make thee to become an Apostata, and a fugitiue of his campe. It is not greiuous, that is endured for the loue of me: and though thou mightst passe ouer this life without paynes, and crosses, yet that māner of life should not content thee, because I thy Lord did euer liue in trauails and carrying of my Crosse.

8. He that persecereth not in good workes, iniureth me, because I haue inspired those good workes. He that without iust cause neglecteth to perseuere in the state that I haue assigned him, doth a work pleasing to the Diuell, because he resemblith himselfe to him, who from an Angels state fell downe to that of the Diuell. He that by inconstancy giueth ouer the good begon, ouerthroweth his owne deed, and knoweth not, whether he shall do any thing better.

The end of the third Booke.



THE FOURTH BOOKE of Religious Perfection.

Wherein is treated, touching the Spirituall Actions of a Religious man: wherby may be vnderstood, what progresse, and profit he hath made in the purchase of Perfection.

How a Religious man must not take it ill, though he be contemned of others.

CHAP. I.

SOME, why art thou so much afflicted and troubled, when thou perceivest others to haue little regard of thee? Wherefore dost thou so earnestly seek after honour, and the opinion of a great name?

name? Art thou entred into Religion, that thou mayst be esteemed of others, or rather that thou mightst with more security come to life euerlasting? Hast thou renounced the world for the pleasing of men, or that thou mightst serue and please me? If thou hast left it to please me, what skilleth it though thou be nothing regarded of others? Thinkest thou, that by this conceit and opinion, either the good of thy soule is hindered, or the seruice diuine which thou hadst a desire to yeald vnto me? Truly no such matter. If any thing were to be feared, it should be this, least humane estimation might worke thy ruine, when as the Apostle sayth: If he should still please men, he should not be Gods seruant. Sonne, if thou examine the matter well, he that esteemeth thee not, profiteth thee much, because he helpeth and furthereth thy separation from the world, and to the making of thy recourse to me, who am to giue life euerlasting. He that maketh much of thee, and recom mendeth thee, stoppeth vp the way of saluation against thee, and therefore my seruants of old, who flourished in former tymes in their Religion, reioyced if they were at any tyme contemned of others, & were on the other side sorry and grieved, if

any excellē were vsed in their commendations: and no lesse do all those Religious men at this day, who haue their part in the true spirit of God. He who liueth in banishment, must little regard others, so he be in the grace and fauour of him, of whom he may be holpen.

2. The first rudiments to be learned of a Religious man, be these, to contemne himselfe, to wish not to be esteemed of others, to abnegate and deny himselfe, to deeme and hold himselfe vnworthy of any prayse whatsoever, to do well, and to be ill entreated and handled. Without the practise of these rudiments and principles no Religious man can profit in the spirituall discipline. Wherefore if after some yeares spent in Religion, thou still hunt after honours, and the estimation of a great name, it is a signe, that thou hast not yet learned the first principles, that be deliuered in Religions Schoole, and how then wilt thou proceed and go forwards in spirit? What maruile, though thou be troubled, when honour is not done thee? If thou desirest to put all griefe out of thy mind, begin in earnest to make a little esteeme of thy selfe, for that he, who shall once contemne himselfe, shall not find any
C c 5 disgust

disgust by others contemning of him. The greater opinion thou hast of thy selfe, the more shalt thou be grieved, when others yeald thee not the honour, that is due vnto thee, and thou expectest.

3. Tell me, is it not worse to be contemned, then not to be esteemed of? and is not he more confounded, who is shamefully handled, then is he, who is spoiled of the honour due vnto him? It is so indeed. Admit thou art not perhaps much esteemed: but I was of others despised, and laughed to scorne. Let the honour due vnto thee, be taken from thee: but I thy head was most ignominiously handled. Thou peradventure art not courteously dealt with by thine enemyes: but I was ill vsed even by them to whome I had beene most beneficiall. And if I thy Lord, Head, and Maister, did with patience suffer so great iniuries, vniustly done me, wherefore art thou dismayd, if at any tyme so much honour be not yealded vnto thee, as thou wouldst wish? Wilt thou be preferred before thy Lord, and Maister? Doth it seem vnto thee fitting, that vnder a thorny head and ignominiously treated, there should by members hid, both delicate, and honorably regarded? The more a man resisteth

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to be contemned, the more vnlike is he to
his Lord: and he that taketh not paynes to
resemble him on earth, shall not haue any
part with him in heaven.

4. Honour is the reward of vertue. If
thou desire to be honoured, thou must of
necessity be vertuous, els thou wouldst wish
to haue that given thee, that is not thy due,
& he that should yeald it ynto thee, should
rather flatter thee, then prayse thee. And
what vertue is there in thee, for which
thou deemest thy selfe worthy of commen-
dation, and veneration? True vertue cuer
goeth in company with Humility, that is
the foundation of all Religious vertues. If
therefore there be not Humility in thee,
true vertue must needs be absent also. But
if there be Humility in thee, and thou be
truly humble, how can it be thou shouldst
desire honour, sith it is the property of Hu-
mility to fly from honours, and commen-
dations of men? He that practiseth Humi-
lity, desireth to be despised of all, and is
glad that he is nothing reckoned of. More-
ouer, what memorable, or noble act hast
thou done, wherefore shouldst thou desire
or seeke after such applause of men? Or
what hast thou suffered for the loue of me,
that thou shouldest receiue a reward at my
hands

hands in this life? Certainly thou hast not
yet shed thy blood for me, neither hast
beene in bands, nor most ignominiously
haled and drawne through the streets, ne
nayled to the crosse, as I was for thy sake.
And though thou hadst suffered all this and
more for me, yet thou shouldest haue receiued
the help of my grace, without which no
good can be done, and so all the praise ha
rather redounded vnto me, and not vnto
thee. Admitte it were true, that thou hadst
done many workes worth the rewarding,
thinkest thou it best to do such thinges
that they may be rewarded with an he
mane honour in this life, that is, with
most contemptible price, if it be compared
with the diuine honour, prepared in hea
uen? He that seeketh for praise of the good
workes that he doeth in this life, must
not expect any other reward in the next
life.

5. Sonne, thou shalt neuer be remedied
or cured of this euill, if thou find not
out the cause therof. The chief cause is the
magnificall and great opinion, thou hast
of thy selfe, whereby thou persuadest thy
selfe, that thou art worthy of honour, and
that he doth thee a great iniury, who shall
not haue the same conceit of thee. And
here hence

thou hast hence is the griefe, thou seelest, when
her haue make no great esteeme of thee. But
in iourneys examine, I pray thee, what there is in
thee, whereby thou shouldest deserue ho-
nour, and dignities? For first whatso-
euer thou hast receiued of me, I do con-
fesse the same, and if I should withdraw
my hand but a little from thee, thou
wouldest be brought to nothing. If all the
good in thee be myne, certainly al honour
so is due to me, and not to thee. The mi-
series, imperfections, and sinnes be thine,
for which whether thou be worthy of
commendation, or rather of confusion,
consider well. O how many Religious men
be deceiued with the estimation, that
they haue of themselues, and will be the
iudges, and arbiters thereof themselues. For
whiles they deeme themselues worthy of
honour, and yet see that they haue not got
the opinion of any good name, either with
their Superiours, or any other, they are
greatly troubled, and afflicted in mind. He
that layeth a bad foundation, maketh a
worse building vpon it.

6. Sonne, thou dost not yet know thy
selfe well, and therefore thou canst not be
a good iudge, nor iudge well of thy selfe.
If thou didst know thy selfe well, thou
wouldest

414 (111) *The Mirrour of*
wouldest not raise so magnificall and state-
ly a building vpon so weake and frayle
foundation. That a man be highly recom-
mented, and held in great veneration,
needs it must be, that there is an opinion,
and estimation before in the mind, not of
him who is to be honoured, but of them
who are to giue the honour, touching his
excellency and worthines. But if they see
no vertue in thee at all, but imperfections
rather, and leuities, how can they haue a
good opinion of thee, or speake and report
of thy prayes? The good workes do cause
a good opinion, and not the desire of him,
who seeketh his owne prayes.

7. Desirest thou to see, how far thou
art in this matter from the truth? Consider
what I am now to say vnto thee. Thou art
either dead to the world, or not. If thou
be not, thou art nothing worth for Reli-
gion, nor Religion for thee, sith it recei-
ueth and approueth none, but such as haue
from their hart renounced the vanities of
the world, and this is to be dead to the
world. And amongst the vanities of the
world one is, to seeke after honour, and to
desire to be esteemed for great. But if thou
be dead to the world, why desirest thou to
be honoured of it? A dead body careth
not,

not, whether it be placed on the right hand, or on the left, in an honorable place, or whether cappes and knees be giuen it, or not . But if thou seekest for a more honorable place, or a greater office, if thou desirest that others should giue thee place, how art thou dead to the world? Neither doth it satisfy me, if thou sayst, thou desirest honour, for my glory and honour, that thou mayst haue greater authority with men, and by help thereof mayst be able to do more good with others. For if it were so, that appertained to me, and not to thee to provide; and if there shall be any need, I will not be wanting to my duty. In the meane time it is my honour, and my glory, if thou be humble, and not greiued, if thou be at any tyme contemned: for so thou shalt be like vnto me, thou shalt liue quiet in Religion, and shalt receiue thy reward in heauen. And know thou, that to bedesirous of prayse, is not the way to help others, but to be a follower of Humility, Charity, and other vertues, and most of all if thou be wholly estranged from all ambition, and auarice, and giue good example to others.

That

*That a Religious man must not be over-
much desirous of the commodities
of his body.*

CHAP. II.

SONNE, to speake faire to a friend, to
please him, and to giue an occasion of
well doing, is very conuenient and com-
mendable: but to fawne vpon an enemy,
who seeketh thine eternall ruine, and to
giue him opportunity of ill doing, is very
absurd and detestable. Thou art not igno-
rant, that of three capitall enemyes thou
hast, one is thyne own body: thou know-
est also, that thy flesh, if it be not chastised
and kept vnder, becometh so fierce and in-
solent, as it will cause thy soules ruine. Tel-
me, what law hath appointed, that a Re-
ligious man should fawne vpon his body,
who is bound to restraints & curb it with
the bridle, and to mortify it? Wherefore
should the Religious attend to the care of
the bodies commodities, who is assured,
that the more he fauoureth and cheris-
heth it, the prouder it will become. My Apostle
by chastising his body, and intreating it
hardly, brought it to the duty it did owe
to the spirit. He therefore, who yealdeth

vnto

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vnto it ouer much, giueth an occasion vnto it of reuolt, and of rebelling against the spirit.

2. Lord, thou hast not made vs lords of our body, that we may take life from it, or mayme and mangle it, but thou hast giuen vs a charge to preserue the health of it, as much as we can, and therefore we may procure those commodities therof, that make to the conseruation of health, and so much the more, for that we vse not onely the soule, but the body also for the doing of thee diuine honour, and seruice.

3. Sonne, it pleaseth me much, that a Religious man conserue and maintaine his good health by fitt meanes, for the doing of my seruice, but this displeaseth me, that vnder pretēce of preseruing the health of body he maketh ouer much of it. I like not that Religious man, who will vsurpe and take vpon him a Phisitians office, and iudge himselte what is for, and what is against his health. For of this it happeneth that whatsoeuer pleaseth his appetite, that is good for him, & what agreeth not with his tast, that is hurtfull for his health. Neither doth he offend me lesse, because he sayth, he doth it for my greater and better seruice. And indeed it is not to serue me,

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but

but to serue his owne gust, and sensuality. It is my seruice, when euery one mortifyeth his owne flesh, as much as is requisite, and it needeth. O how many Religious be there, who vnder a pretext of conseruing their health, become the slaues of their owne desires? The health is better kept by parsimony, and moderation, then by the procuring of thinges appertayning to the tast. Yea by this the health is impayred, for that there is excesse in all thinges commonly that haue pleasure with them. Moreouer it is an obligation, proper to a Religious person, to yeald no more to the body, then what is needfull for intertayning of life, & not what is for the stirring vp of the flesh.

4. If the Religious man would examine, whence arileth that so great a care he hath of himselfe, and of his body, he would not be so anxious, and importune in seeking after the commodities therof. In some it groweth of a superfluous cōmiseration and pittie towards themselues, because they could wish to yeald their body some pleasure. In others it proceedeth of a magnificall opinion they conceiue of their owne estimation: for whereas they are perswaded, that it greatly importeth the cōmon

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mon wealth, if they liue long, their care is all in all about the preservation of their health. Both these, namely commiseration, and estimation, be selfe-loues daughters. And what good fruit can come of so dangerous a roote? These men peradventure thinke, that if they were gone, my Church would come to decay, or their Religion would come to ruine. They are greatly deceiued. Many other pillars haue fallen, and yet both my Church, and Religion hold their owne: that care appertayneth to me as well to conserue both, as to prouide them of good workmen and labourers. And I vnder take, that the Religiō, when such men are gon, shall not only not come to ruine, but shall further receaue an increase, because those commonly who haue taken lesse paynes in Religion, and haue most troubled it, be those who haue beene most of all given to their pleasures, and commodities of body. And these be they, who do by their example overthrow Religious houses.

5. When thou becamest Religious, didst thou it not, with a mind of suffering much for the sauing of thy soule, and for the loue o me? Didst thou not purpose to liue a poore life, and to beare with all in-

commodityes, that be incident to poore persons? Whence then is it, that now, when thou shouldst haue greater light of mind, and more charity, thou dost not put those thy first cogitatiōs in effect by works? O extreme bad iugling and deccite. Religion is instituted for the mortifying of the body, and for the enriching of the soule with spirituall riches, and thou thinkest that a great care is to be vsed and had about the cherishing of the body with the neglect of the soules health? Tell me, I pray thee: In the world hadst thou thy commodityes of body at will, or not? If not, wherefore desirest thou them in Religion, wherinto thou didst enter to suffer incommodityes for Christs sake? And if thou hadst thy commodityes, and didst therof voluntarily depriue thy selfe for the loue of me, that thou mightst please me the more, wherefore dost thou now in Religion seeke them, by thee abandoned before, with an offence to me, and bad example to others? Moreover, if thou hast renounced the cōmodityes of thy body for the loue of me, and now returnest vnto them againe, thou manifestly declarest, that thou wilt not haue any thing to do with the loue of me. And what an esteeme should I make of him, who is so fickle,

kle, and inconstant in louing me? And if peraduenture thou thinke, that thou mayst both loue me, and seeke thy temporal commodities withall, and that against my wil, thou art greatly deceiued: for as much as he cannot loue truly, who doth not conforme himselfe to the will of the beloued.

6. Sonne, if thou desirest to vnderstand, how I handled myne owne body, runne ouer my life from the day of my nativity til my death, and thou shalt easily see, how few commodities I vsed. For so soone as I came into the world, a stable was my bed-chamber, and the manger my bed. Within a while after *Herod* persecuting me, I was forced to flye into *Egipt*. Consider thou heere, what commodities I found both in my way thither, & in a countrey so far off and barbarous, when as I had a poore Mother, who also was to take her iourney and to packe in all hast away in the night tyme, so soone as she had newes of the matter. After that being returned from *Egipt*, I passed ouer the remainder of my life in pouerty. In the thirtieth yeare of my age I retired my selfe into the desert, where I punished my poore body with hunger, thirst, watching, lying vpon the ground, and the fast of fourty dayes and nights.

After my leauing the desert, I trauailed on foote from one towne & castle to another, and preached the kingdome of beauen in all places where I came, and liued continually by almes that others gaue me. In time of my passion, I did not only want all commodities, but also one affliction succeeded in place of another. Finally, when I came to dy, a crosse was my bed to lye on, and a crowne of thornes my pillow.

7. Now iudge thou, who art Religious, whether it be conuenient for thee my seruant, who hast made profession of imitating me, to handle thy body so nicely & delicately, since I thy Lord haue dealt with myne owne so roughly and hardly. And though my body were euer subiect to the soule, and most obedient to reason, yet I did neuer entreate it delicately, nor euer yealded vnto it any commodities, or recreations at al. And wilt thou now afford vnto thy body, that hath so often in a most insolent manner insulted against the spirit and reason, all kinds of contentements and pleasures? I the Lord of maiesty euer contented my selfe with a poore and meane diet, and as meane cloathing, and other intertaynement: and wilt thou in Religion, not contented with the common, affect & desire

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Desire superfluityes? This is not to be, or to lead the lyfe of a Religious person, but rather to couer and conceale a secular life by the habit of Religion.

8. An ouer great sollicitude of temporall commodities, is a thorne that pricketh ouer sore, and greatly hurteth a Religious man. For first it maketh him a procuratour for the body, yea and a bondslaue vnto it. And who seeth not, how great an indignity it is for a Religious man of a punisher of his body to become a Purueyour for it, and instead of whipping it, to yeald it all manner of contentements? Againe, it holdeth and keepeth him so distracted in mind as he taketh no gust, or pleasure at all in matters of Spirit. And what other thing is this, then to make him sensuall, that he may neither tast, nor mind those thinges that be of God? Moreouer it maketh him churlish and harsh to those with whome he liueth: for as much as heeuer will in all thinges haue what is best, and most commodious for himselfe, neglecting the commodities of others: yea he preferreth his priuate commodities before the common, not regarding what hurt may redound to the Religion thereby, so he may haue what he desireth himselfe. And what is this,

but to spoile a Religious man of charity, discretion, and all?

9. Neither is there heer an end of this importune & preposterous care of the body, but it further maketh the Religious querulous, idle, froward, surly, a murmurer, and of a peruerse and bad example. He would haue all moued to commiserate and pittie his case, all to shew beneuolence & good will vnto him, and therefore he attributeth euery least distemper of body, and indisposition of his health to the sore trauailes and paynes, he hath taken in Religion. And how can it be possible, that there should be either spirit, or Religious discipline in such mē? O vnhappy subiects, and as vnhappy Superiours, who permit such things in Religion, wherein they are pastours, and haue a charge, seeing this is nothing els, then to bring a certaine infection into it, & to shew a way vnto yong men for the quite ruining and ouerthrowing therof.

That

*That it is not inough for a Religious man to
mortify his body, vnles the mind
be restrained also.*

CHAP. III.

S O N N E, that the Religious mā so mortify his body, & the senses thereof, as it become not proud, & rise against the soule, it is good and healthful, but yet Religious perfection consisteth not therein, but rather in the inward vertues of the mind, of which followeth the reformation of the passions, and senses. Neither can the body be directed by the soule, vnles the soule it selfe, togeather with all it own facultyes and powers, be first of all drawn out, and fashioned to the right and straight rule. A crooked rule is not for the making of a thing straight. The soule is then ruled straight, when it is conformed to the diuine will, which is the first, and an infallible rule. Let a man mortify his flesh, as much as he will, and keep it in subiection as much as possibly may be, if the affections be not reduced to a certaine rule, he shal neuer come to that peace of mind, that is necessary for the attayning of perfection. Againe, the affections cannot be brought to a modera-

tion, vnles the grounds of them, of which they haue their beginnings, that is the vnderstanding and will, be brought in order also.

2. Thou knowest, that the vnderstanding is the principall power or faculty, on which all the harmony, consent, & gouernement of the rest of the facultyes depend. The will vnderstandeth not, and therefore it cannot worke, vnles the light & knowledge of the vnderstanding put to the assisting hand. The rest of the inferiour facultyes, that execute the commaunds and directions of the Superiour powers, depend also on the vnderstanding, which sheweth vnto them, what euery one is to do. But if the vnderstanding should chance to be out of order, the whole frame & state of the both inward and outward man must needs be in trouble, and confounded. Selfe iudgment doth indeed most of all preuent and go before the vnderstanding, by which it is so sore blinded, as it maketh no good deliberation, & therof also frameth a worse conclusion. Whence it is, that if thou desire to bring the vnderstanding to an vp-right & true gouernemēt, thou must needs spoile it of it owne iudgment.

3. Proper iudgment I call that, which

is

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is thine owne conceit, thine owne purpose, and thine owne opinion, that hath not any correspondence either with my iudgment, or with that of thy Superiours, and therefore is properly thine, and peculiar to thee, dissenting from the common iudgment of thy forefathers, of the wise & vertuous. Wherefore when this thy iudgment is not agreeable to myne, that is, to the first rule that neuer deceiueth, it cannot be either right or good. For what rectitude, and straightnes, or goodnes can there be of that, which hath the origen of proud presumption? Whiles thou cleavest to thine owne iudgment, thou dost not only prefer it before the iudgment of others, but also thinkest it better then the iudgment of others, that all be deceiued besides thy selfe, that none vnderstandeth the matter but thy selfe, and heereupon thou also becomest proude in mind, contemning all others, as fooles, and lesse intelligent. And is not this a notable presumption, and pride? What can be worse, then for one man presumptuously to prefer himselfe before all? Hence it commeth, that being ouer deuoted to thine owne iudgment, in deliberations thou giuest no place at all to other mens counsailes, which is nothing els, then

to

to become obstinate, willfull, stiffe, and stubborne.

4. Who would now meruaile, if the be exposed to be beguyled and deceiued by the Diuell? If thou fall into most grosse & palpable errors? For whence haue grown the Heresyes, Schismes, sects, discords, and other stirres not to be numbred, that were in tymes past, and be now in the world but from men ouer much addicted to the conceit of their owne iudgment, & without The dearer thine owne iudgment is vnto thee, the more it hurteth thee: for it separateth thee from thy Superiours: it maketh thee to seem wise in thine owne eyes to trust thy selfe ouer much, that it may the sooner bring thee to the height of pride, & in conclusion precipitate thee into that pit of cogitations, that thou wilt thinke thy selfe not to need any guide, or directour in the spirituall way. O how much more vnderstanding, and more wise is that Religious man, who vseth his Superiours iudgment for his owne, nor seeketh any other thing: for by so doing he satisfieth me, he heapeth vp his merit in heaven, and leadeth a quiet life on earth, then which nothing is more contenting, and pleasant.

5. Another thing, that troubleth, and peruer-

erupteth the vnderstanding, is a certaine
curiosity of vnderstanding matters apper-
taining to God. For seeing the vnderstan-
ding is addicted to learne and vnderstand
things, if curiosity also put it forwards, it
will wander vp and downe ouer so many
countreys, as it doth in the end quite loose
itselfe. Matters of God do far exceed the
vnderstanding of man, and therefore im-
possible it is for his shallow capacity to cō-
prehend or conceiue them: and therefore,
who would curiously search into their
mysteries, easily looseth his sight, and is
blinded with that infinite light. For if the
corporall eyes cannot without preiudice
of the sight behold the light of the Sunne,
how wilt thou haue, that human vndersta-
nding, by nature limited, should be able to
comprehend that inaccessible light of God
which is infinite, & admitterh no circum-
scription, or limitation at all.

6. He that loadeth himselfe with a
burden that he is not able to beare, deser-
ueth to be oppressed, and borne downe by
the weight therof. God should not be God,
if he should be conceiued of any created vn-
derstanding. Desirest thou to handle mat-
ters concerning God wisely? Accomodate
thy selfe to the vertue of Fayth, and seeke

no

no more: for it will in a very short tyme most certainly teach thee all, which is necessary for euerlasting saluation. Take thee also away the curiosity of vnderstanding such matters, as belong to Superiours, and others that nothing concerne thee, because they greatly disquiet and trouble thee, and further hinder thee from coming to the iust moderation and temper of vnderstanding, and knowing of others defects: sith it is inough for thee to know thy owne, which if thou know well, and diligently amend, thy payne is not ill employed. It is a vice of Curiosity to stir vpon and put a man forwards to fish out, and to learne other mens matters, and to be forgetfull of his owne.

7. There is yet another defect of the vnderstanding, which is, to iudge rashly, and if it be not taken away, the vnderstanding cannot be sayd to be squared straight. And this default happneth, when without any cause at all, no censure going before, and vndoubted iudgment is pronounced and giuen, touching others actions. And if a man also interprete the intention of another in ill part, when he may interprete it in good part, or excuse it, such a iudgment is very pernicious vnto him, because

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is against both Charity and Iustice. If thou be not a iudge of the inward man, nor yet knowest him, how darest thou iudge and censure him? I am the searcher of mens harts alone: euery mans intention is manifest alone to me, and therefore the office of iudging is due to me alone.

8. Moreouer for the directing of the will, needfull it is to remedy three defects most of all, no lesse troublesome, then dangerous. The first is, that the will is of it owne nature blind, and obnoxious to a thousand falles. The second is, sith the will is free, it can wander whither it list, whether it keep the good and right way, or the bad, & by-way. As it is blind, that it stray and fall, it needeth a guide: and as it is free, that it may not exceed, and go beyond reason's bounds, it needeth a bridle. The guide shall be the diuine will, declared and explained by them, who exercise my place in governing. The bridle shall be the feare and dread of Gods iustice, which will direct it in the right way, and in security. Oh happy is that Religious, who guided with such a bridle, followeth so trusty and faithfull a directour in his way. The third defect is, that the will is wont to seeke a propriety in it selfe, from which vices it be deliuered,

deliuered, it will neuer be brought in order. To be Religious, and to retayne owne will, can in no case stand together. For he is sayd to be a true Religious man who followeth me with his crosse. And it is already decreed in my Scripture, that none can follow me vnles he deny himselfe and forsake his owne will.

9. Lord, is then a mans owne will to be left, if it be carryed towards pious and good things? Sonne, thou must abandon whatsoeuer thou desirest of thine owne will, whether it be temporall, or spirituall. I call that the proper will, that conspires not with myne, or with that of thy Superior, and is properly thine: and because it is discordant from myne it cannot be good. Proper will is that, which proclaimes warre against me: it I abhorre, it I haue laid the foundation thereof in hell. Hell intertaineth it, and it alone is more seuerely punished therein. O mad Religious man, who maketh more accompt of his owne will, then of Gods! I did not know my selfe so. When my Humanity had an affliction from drinking the bitter chalice of passion, I sayd to my heavenly Father: Not myne, but thy will be done. If I had my will, I would not in this life do myne owne will.

both it seeme fitting, and conuenient, that thou shouldst do thyne? Thinkest thou it meet, that thou shouldst preferre thyne owne will before the will of thy Creatour, and of thy Superiours? He that extolleth himselfe by making a great esteeme of his owne will, must needs expect a sore fall to his vicer perdition for euer.

That a Religious man must shake off his inordinate affection to his parents.

CHAP. III.

ONE, vnles thou shalt forget thy people, and the house of thy Father, I will not loue and imbrace thee, nor deale with thee in any familiar manner with thee. It is not enough once to haue renounced the world, and thy parents, as thou didst in the beginning of thy conuersion: but that thou must arrive to the height of perfection, and proposed thee, thou must needs persist and continue in the same renunciation till the very end of thy life. It little or nothing obiecth the prisoner to be out of the prison, vnles his yrons be also taken away, which he had on his legs, when he was in the prison. Euen so it will do thee little good to haue left thy Fathers house, vnles

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thou

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thou shalt also cut off thyne inordinate
affection to thy parents, for this affection
bindeth thee so strongly, as thou canst not
forget them.

2. It is true, that in holy Writ I have
promised to the Religious an hundred fold
together with life everlasting, but yet to
them who out of a love of serving me, have
left father and mother, and whatsoever
they possessed in the world. True it is,
that I am the maister, and do teach, & have
also from the very beginning protested,
that none can be my disciple, who shall
not hate father and mother, his owne life,
& what euer besides, that may keep him fro
profiting in spirit. He is not a good schol-
ler, neither can profit, who is not attentiu
to what is read in the schoole. The lesson
that I deliuer to my hearers is, that they
dye to the world, that they maister & sub-
due their perturbations of mind that make
a man vnquiet, that they spoile themselves
of all carnall affection to parents, least they
be excluded and shut out of the way to per-
fection. Dost not thou by thine owne ex-
perience find, that the ouermuch affectio
thou carryest to thy parents, maketh thee
vnquiet? Seest thou not also, that the same
molested and troubleth others? Dost thou

not

not observe, that whiles thy mynde and care is on them, thou comest to forget thy selfe? And this in truth is not to resort to my schoole, but to runne rather out of it. If thou be dead to the world, why doth the care of parents trouble thee? If thou only livest to me, as thou oughtest, why art thou not conioyned with me, and holdest me in place of Father and mother, & of all things els? O how well did my beloued, and Religious servant S. Francis vnderstand this, when he sayd from his hart: *Deus meus & omnis*, and other my Religious Saints, who to auoyd all occasions of dealing with their parents, retyred themselves into far remote deserts, and as men dead to the world, hid themselves in caues vnder ground, as in their sepulchres and graues.

3. Lord, hast thou not commaunded in thy holy Law, that our neighbours should be loued, yea & our enenyes to, & that they are to be holpen in their necessaries, and wars. How thē is it thou now exactest, that we should leaue, and hate our parents, who hold the first place amongst our neighbours? Sonne, I deny not, that the parents and friends should be loued, whome thou hast left behind in the world, but I say they are to be loued with a spirituall affection,

and with that loue, which perfect Charity requireth. And thou art not ignorant, I know, that thou art more neere vnto thy selfe, then thou art to parents, or friends: and Charity requireth that thou loue them so, as thou do not thy selfe any spirituall hurt for them. If then they trouble thee in Religion, and be a disquiet vnto thee in my seruice, and any impediment and let also to thy spirituall profit, why shouldst thou not forsake them? why shouldst thou not get thy selfe far from them? Againe, art thou not to hate those parents, who oppose themselves against thee, and had rather haue thee to liue out of Religion? & more then that, labour also to draw thee out of it, and to fly from them, as from the Diuels instruments, and workes? I thou must not hold him for father or friend, who seeketh to put thy soule in ieopardy of damnation. They are not thy neighbours, nor yet of the number of those corporall enemyes, whome the Christian law would haue loued: but they be the enemyes of thy spirituall good, they are the enemyes of my honour and glory, and to say in one word, they be the baits of hell it selfe.

4. But when need is to releue them in their necessity, as well corporall, as spirituall,

ituall, how, and how farre, that thou art
vnderstand from thy Superiours. And
now thou, that the Diuell hath by a feig-
ned and counterfaite shew of Charity and
piety towards parents, thrust many out of
their happy state of Religion. No Religi-
ous man, vnles he be more then mortified,
and more then dead to the world, and to
himselſe, may euer with security deale
with his parents. O how displeasing is it
vnto me, whiles I see some Religious to
haue a most earnest desire to vnderstand
something touching the state of their pa-
rents, and to receiue letters from them? For
what is it els, but to seeke an occasion of
trouble, and of distraction in their prayers?
It is not much to haue forsaken parents in
body, vnles thou also abandon them in
mind and cogitation. O how wisely did
some seruants of myne, who hauing recei-
ued letters of their friends from far coun-
tries, for the conseruing of their quiet and
peace of mind, threw them vnread into the
fire. O lamentable folly of some Religious
persons! Their parents by them left in the
world, haue laid a side all care and memo-
ry of them, whiles they againe be day and
night sollicitous and anxious about them.

5. Neither do those Religious lesse of-

send me, who do not only wish, but also by all manner of diligence on their part seeke to raise their parents or kyn to great dignities, and therefore they subiect themselves to the men of the world, that they may gaine and wyn their fauour: & these men do greatly preiudice both their owne authority, and their Religion. Sonne, dost thou not see, that is not to serue me, but thy friends? Seest thou not, that is not to furnish and enrich thy soule, but to make others rich by many temporall commodities? What rule perscribeth, that thou shouldst play thy parents Procurators? Haue an eye to thy selfe, for I assure thee, that in the latter iudgment I will not demaund of thee, whether thy parents were great in this life, nor whether thou shewdest thy selfe diligent in procuring them dignities and honours, but will rather exact an accompt of thee, whether thou hast busied and intangled thy self in such affaires. This is not the way of Religious perfection, but the way of loosing all spirit, and all piety together.

6. Is it not an exceeding great madness for a Religious man to be most cowardly and negligent in running the way of perfection, whereto he was bound: and to

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be most cunning, and to shew a great witt
about the raising of his friends vp to great
dignities in the world? And what is worse
then it? It more displeaseth me, that there
be Religious, who take more care that
their parents and friends abound in tem-
porall commodities, then in spirituall.
Whence it is, that they very seldome, and
withall coldly, aduise them to the exercise
of vertues, but they often, and in very ear-
nest manner excite them to the procuring
of earthly riches. Sonne, what will the
dignities and titles of thy friends do thee
good, if thou be imperfect? What reward
expectest thou from me, if thou trauailest &
takest paynes only for flesh and bloud?
Certes thou shouldst prouide better for thy
elfe, and for their soules good, if thou
wouldst direct them in the way of vertue,
and by so doing thy merit would be the
greater, and their soules good should be
the more securely promoted.

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That

That the Religious man ought to use great
prudence, and circumspection in the
company of others.

CHAP. V.

S O N N E, all the Religious with whom
thou liuest, be my beloued children, &
my charity wherewith I tender them, is
not partiall, but generall: for I loue all, &
I wish vnto all the true good. And I desire
that thou also by my example wouldst loue
all indifferently, and wish vnto all perfec-
tion in this life, and euermlasting glory in
the next: for so perfect Religious Charity
requireth. O how much do the particuler
familiarities of some Religious persons
displease me, who contract the charity that
they should extend to all, to two or three,
with whome they continually keep com-
pany, and by their bad example do greatly
offend others. And how is it possible, I
should not hate such conuersation? The
amity and friendship that hurteth the com-
munity, was neuer good, neither had euer
a good ending, but euer brought forth
some euill, as murmurations, obloquies,
complaints, dissensions, wherby though
no other great mischiefe should follow,
these

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these conuersations would be dangerous & pernicious inough to Religion.

Sith thou art a member of a Religious community, thou art euery way and by all meanes bound not only to loue it, but also for the loue of it to suffer something not pleasing to thy liking. For we see that a man to be conserued in health, some member therof is oftentimes either tormented with cutting and searing, or quite cut off from the body, for that the members be naturally ordained for the conseruation of the wholy body. If therefore thou louest thy Religion, wherof thou art a member, thou must haue a care, that it be preserued whole and entire, & to remoue all thinges from it, that may any way hurt it, among which not without cause, is an ouermuch familiarity with some particular persons. He that loueth truly, is most circumspect and carefull not to offend the beloued in any thing. But we see, that Communities be not a little offended & hurt by priuate friendship, especially if the same be betweene persons desirous of a more free life, who be held neither in the number of the very spirituall, nor of the well mortified. Wherefore it followeth, that he, who forbearcth not from such like

conuerſation, that offendeth the reſt of the company, is not a louer of the community nor of his Religion. I know wel that ſome Religious perſon is otherwhiles found who taketh very little or no care at all to loue his Religion, and little regarded whether it goeth on well or ill, ſo he may not himſelfe want his own commoditie. But euery Religious perſon muſt know that Religion is his mother, and if he loue it not, and uſeth it not as his mother, he ſhall not himſelfe be dealt with, as with a ſonne, but as ingratefull ſhall be one day puniſhed, as he deſerueth.

3. Neither am I ignorant, that there be not wanting of thoſe, who excuſe themſelues, that they are of their own nature & complexion very melancholy, and for that cauſe do vſe only the company of few. And whence haſt thou learned, that the Religious muſt vſe the direction and conduct of nature and complexion? If nature ſhould incline thee to eaſe and ydleneſſe, or to pride, mightſt thou giue thy ſelfe to eaſe and pride? But remember ſonne, that thou art now become Religious, that thou mightſt overcome nature, and mortify the inordinate deſires of bloud, or of complexion. Now then it appeareth, that the affection

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affection of particuler familiarity, sith it is not conforme to a Religious spirit, must needs be inordinate. Neither is it good, if thou sayst: That in this particuler conuersation there is no euill, nor any peruerse end intended: for it carryeth a shew of an euill great inough, when others are therby offended, and that the Superiours reprehend and find fault with it.

4. Lord, it is thy will, that all should profit in spirit, & vse those meanes, which may help to spirituall profit: I then find by experience, that I profit more in spirit by often conuersing with one, then by the talke of many, why wilt thou deprive me of such an help? Sonne, to conuerse, as it is meet with them, who may be able to promote thee in spirit, cannot be offensive to the community; for this helpe thou mayst haue, all ouermuch familiarity being set aside, of which we heere speake. But if the community be offended, it is a signe, that thy conuersation goeth beyond the appointed bounds, neither is it so diuine and spirituall, as thou bearest thy selfe in hand. And though thou sometymes receiuest some spirituall fruit and good by that priuate familiarity and conuersation, yet this thyne owne commodity should not be preferred

preferred before the cōmon offence of thy Religion, but perfect charity requireth that thou wouldst vse another way in procuring that spirituall fruit to thy selfe, without the offending of others.

5. And if ouer much familiarity among the Religious, and my seruants offendeth others, and therefore is worthy of reprehension, how much would it offend, if a Religious man should vse so often conuersation with a secular man, whereby an occasion might be giuen of bad suspitions? The conuersation of a Religious man with one of the world, ought not only to giue edification to them with whome he keepeth company, but to them also who see it, for as much as he is bound to be a good example to all. And if the wise & spirituall men censure so frequent conuersatiō with particuler persons not to be good, they ought to forbear it. Neither is it inough, if he say, That he treateth of good & pious matters, that he laboureth about the mans conuersion, and that they do ill who censure him otherwise. I do not deny, but that thy neighbour should be holpen, but I affirme that it must be done by due and fit meanes: but ouermuch conuersation with some one is no due meanes, neither ordred

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Charity. The Religious man, who in helping others hath no care of his owne good name, doth ill, but he that giueth an occasion vnto others of thinking ill of him, doth worse, for so much as not only an euill selfe, but also the very shew of euill is to be taken heed of.

6. Neither doth he satisfy who answereth, That he hath a good intention in his, sith all our workes must of necessity be both good, and remoued of all suspicion. Others do not iudge by thy good intention which they see not, but by thy conuersation which they behold. And though they should see thyne intention, yet they would not excuse it, for that by thy ouermuch familiarity thou bringest it in danger also? How many conferences haue amongst Religious persons begun with the spirit, and ended afterwards with the flesh and blood. The ouermuch confidence of our selues hath caused many to fall. If many haue bene caught but with one casting of the net, how many will be caught with long conuersation, and often talking together? Our sensuality is very crafty, and least her iugling should be found out and discovered, otherwhils she concealeth herself vnder pretence of helping some person, and

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& it beginneth indeed with spiritual talk
but afterwards the speech full of affection
doth easily manifest whereto it aymed.
Sonne, beware of the Diuell, and that most
of all, when he transfigureth himselfe into
an Angell of light, and as death fly his com-
pany to whome thou findest thy selfe sensu-
ally affected. A little fire, vnto it be re-
moued far from straw, breaketh first into
smoke, and afterwards into a flame.

7. There be other Religious, who con-
trary to their Superiours will, do seeke the
familiarity of great persons in the world
not so much to promote and further their
soules good, as to gaine vnto themselves
their good will and fauour. And is not
this a thing most sorely to be lamented?
Can it be possible, that a Religious man
who hath renounced the world, should
seeke after the patronage of a Lord of the
world? Tell me, I pray thee, for what
cause dost thou seeke their fauour and help?
Is it to satisfy Religious discipline? or is it
to mortify thy selfe, as thou shouldst do?
or is it also the more easily to come to perfection?
But certes for this thou needest not the fa-
uour or assistance of men of the world: but
if thou seekest help, thou hast many in Re-
ligion that can do it. Yet others be not so
simple

people, but that they easily smell out, that
thou doest for none other cause, seeke their
good will and protection, then that thou
mayst withdraw thy selfe from Religious
discipline, and that thy Superiour may not
commaund thee at his pleasure, that which
hindereth not with thyne owne good li-
ving. And what other thing is this, then
to put a Religious habit vpon secular li-
berty? What is it, but vnder hand, to liue
in the world, and to entertaine friendship
herewith, & in the cleare light to be at de-
stance with it? But I see as well, and as
clearly by night, as by day, and I expect
them at a tyme, when they shall be aban-
doned of all fauour, and help of others.
Then an account shall be taken of their
pernicious wylineffe, & they shall know
how much it hurteth, from my defence and
protection to degenerate and fall to the pa-
tronage of earthly Lords, and shall to their
hurt cry aloud: *Accursed is the man, who
trusteth in man.*

*That a Religious man must flye Ease
and Idleness.*

CHAP. VI.

Sonne, Idleness hath becne condem-
ned euen from the tyme of the worlds
creation

creation, as the origen of very many evils
 and that was in such sort done, as none
 receiued it. Wherefore thy first Father
Adam was placed in the terrestriall paradise
 in a place of pleasure, not to liue at ease,
 to be idle therein, or to tryfle the tyme in
 creating himself, but as the Scripture spea-
 keth, to worke in it. And being thrust
 out of Paradise, that he might not be idle
 the earth was deliuered him to manure and
 husband, that he might eate his bread
 the sweat of his browes. And dost thou
 who art made the heire of this thy first pa-
 rents labours, thinke to eate thy bread
 without sweating? Thy Father *Adam* had
 also laboured in the terrestriall paradise,
 he had continued therein, and wilt thou be
 ydle in thine exile, that is a place of payne
 taking? Wilt thou attend to thy pleasure
 in the vale of teares? Consider my sonne
 that thou art not yet come to thy country
 but art still a stranger and pilgrime, as all
 thy forefathers were. And if a pilgrime
 haue a desire to arriue at last home to his
 countrey, he must not giue himselfe to
 ydlenes, or stay vpon the way, but go con-
 tinually forwards, least the darknes of the
 night come vpon him.

2. My seruant *Iob* sayth, That man is

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orne to labour and therefore he that lo-
teth his ease, and taketh not paynes accor-
ding to his state, seemeth not to answer
the condition of man. And therefore some
haue not without cause called Idlenes the
buryall of a liuing man. O vnhappy Reli-
gious, whose buryall is in his pleasures, the
ench whereof, by reason of an inneterate
custome he smelleth not, but he shall feele it
(alas) in his death, when he shall also haue
feeling of the hurt. For he must of neces-
sity go deprived, and destitute of good
workes, to another life, where the fewer
good workes a man shall bring, the lesse he
shall haue of happynes, and he that might
haue brought more, shall be greatly sory
that he brought the not. O how true is that
which the Wiseman sayth, That a liuing
dog is better then a dead lyon. There be
some Religious men excellently learned,
generous of nature, & enriched with many
talents by God, but so giuen ouer to ease &
idlenes, as where they are able wonder-
fully to promote the Christian cause by
their paynes and trauaile, yet they do no-
thing, and what be they els, then dead
lyons? Certes a liuing dog, that is, that
Religious man doth much more, who
though but meanly and slenderly provided

of learning, doth yet what he can, and is able, for the loue of me. And indeed he th doth little, when he can no more, please me more then doth he, who is of ability to performe much, and yet doth it not.

3. I was euer a capitall enemy of idleness, and therefore meete is it, that thou who makest a profession of imitating me shouldst also be auerted from idleness. I knowest well, that I began to take payne from my very childhood, in helping on while my poore mother, another while my foster-father Ioseph in his trade; and will not thou, who art come out of the world to Religion to trauaile and take paynes help the Religion thy mother in her labours, and thy Superiours who intertaine and gouerne thee? Remember, what my Apostle sayth, That an idle man is not worthy of his meate. To desire to eate, & not to haue a will to labour, is nothing else but to haue a will to consume and spend what is got by others: a thing vnworthy of a man, not to say, a Religious man. Neither doth it satisfy, that thou sayst, I am ready to take great paynes, but my Superiours will not put me to those labours wherunto I haue an inclination, and which I am able to do with commodity and ease. This

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no iust excuse, sith it is not for thee to choose the office, or thing that is to be exercised or done. The seruant in seruing must not follow his owne inclination, but his Maisters, and therefore the Superiour supplyeth my place, to appoint vnto his subjects, what is to be done to my greater glory. Moreover, whence art thou sure, that thou canst performe that charge and office well, wherunto thou hast an inclination? Thou canst not in this matter be an vpright and indifferent iudge by reason of the passion that deceiueth thee. Euery one pleaseth himselfe in his owne, but the paine and difficulty is, that the same may also be pleasing to others: and though thou shouldst content all, and yet should displease me, what good would it do thee? And therefore thou shalt neuer free thy selfe from the fault of idlenes, vnles thy trauayles be conforme to my will, declared vnto thee by thy Superiour.

4. O how pernicious a thing is idlenes to a Religious person. For where idlenes reigneth, there is no charity, which cannot be idle, as my Apostle sayth very well. If therefore thou be idle, it followeth, that thou wantest charity. And what will it profit thee, poore and miserable man, if

thou hast receiued the gifts, and talents of the co
all creatures, & be without charity? What he w
merits canst thou heap vp for thy selfe, in ourin
thou labourst not according to charity, others
Idleness is no more repugnant to paines than a
king and Charity, then it is pleasing to quit o
the Diuell, to whose tentations & assaults 6.
he giveth place, oportunitie, and occasion, pure, e
Where idleness is, there the Diuell euer findeth two m
derth ready entrance, for as much as idleness and lif
is to him like a citty, vnprovided of the demad ne
sence of walls. Hence it is, that those an- onseru
cient holy Fathers, who made the desert meritiu
famous, did euer and anone admonish owne g
their schollers, for freeing themselves from it or h
the impugnations & assaults of the Diuell bee, if
to haue a care to be euer in some employ hyne
ment or busines, sith by so doing an occasi- yme,
is taken from the Diuell of working his cultiua
bad designs. by sou

5. Idleness further worketh another hyne i
mischief and hurt to a Religious man, while th
& that is, that he falleth into many defects o little
for as much as it maketh him curious, &
breaker of silence, & detractour: it causeth
him to disturbe and hinder others in their
good exercises; to go often abroad, and to
wander vp and downe the Citty, and to
secke sundry recreations and pastimes for
th

he contenting of himselfe. This is not
the way of purchasing vertue, nor of la-
bouring to perfection, wherunto thy fore-
fathers ariued, and now do in a most plea-
sant and contenting manner enioy the
fruit of their good works and labours.

6. Finally idlenes is cause of another
fault, that it spoileth the Religious man of
two most precious thinges, namely tyme,
and life, and is not this a most manifest
madnes? I haue giuen thee life, and do still
conserue it, that thou mayst enrich it by
meriting, and hast thou no regard of thyne
owne good, and commodity? What pro-
fit or help can thy neighbour expect from
thee, if thou hast not any consideration of
thyne owne weale? I haue granted thee
tyme, and oportunity of manuring and
cultiuating thyne owne vineyard, that is
thy soule, and thou sufferest it, through
thyne idlenes, to grow wilde. What good
wile thou do to thy Religion, who hast
so little care of thyne owne soule?

*The Mirroure of
That a Religious man ought to be practised
in hearing, and talking of God, and
of spirituall matters.*

CHAP. VII.

SONNE, many be by Sermons drawne to the faith, & to a better course of life, and many by spirituall talke, and discourse be stirred vp in the loue of God, and of vertues: whence it is, that to heare, or to speake of matters of spirit, helpeth very much to the attayning of perfection, for that the one and the other findeth entrance into the innermost receipts of the hart. Spirituall talke, whiles care is giuen vnto it, is receyued into the hearers hart, as a good & holy seed, that cannot but bring forth good and answerable fruit. And because the same commeth from out of the hart of the deliuerer of spiritual matters, it must needs also set his hart on fire, from whose mouth such speach commeth. Conference therefore of pious matters profiteth both the hearer, and the speaker.

2. All this is true, but yet if there want loue in the hart, neither the tongue, nor the eares will busy themselues much in spirituall matters. Whence thinkest thou

doth

th it come, that some speake so seldome,
and so coldly of spirituall matters, but of a
defect and want of feruent loue? Whence
thinkest thou, groweth the loathing and
fearfull, when speach is had of pious things
and heauenly, but of a defect of the same
loue? If the fire of the loue of God, and of
vertues should burne within our harts,
they would vpon the very least talke of spi-
rituall matters be so set on fire, as the very
heart would breake forth, and discouer it
life without: neither would there be talk
of any other matter, and nothing with
any greater desire heard, then of spirit, of
emotion, of the loue of vertues: for not
only the tongue, but the very eares also do
most readily follow the desires of the hart.
O how great a confusion is it of some
religious men, who though they make
the profession of Religious life, do yet ei-
ther neuer, or very vnwillingly treat of
spirituall matters: whereas notwithstan-
ding there is no man, that doth not willin-
gly speake of the matters, that belong to his
owne function or office, and also willingly
care others, if they bring into their dis-
course matters, that appertaine to their pro-
fession. Sonne, dost thou long, and earne-
stly desire to speake of God often and with

pleasure? Loue him, and the greater the But i
loue shall be in thy hart towards him, and por
the more deeply imprinted in it, the more they
facility and pleasure shalt thou find in talke the
king of matters concerning God. Hast thou impo
a desire to be often in company with the esse
who treat of spirituall matters? Be thou 5
earnestly affected to such talke: for to him
that loueth, nothing can happen more co by a
tenting, then to heare others talke and they
speake of the thing which he loueth. they

4. The better the goodnes of euery conu
thing is knowne, the more it is esteemed brou
and the more earnestly desired. That spiritua
tuall matters be not so well regarded, no full
so hartily desired, as they deserue, the fault wi
groweth of nothing els, then that the the c
goodnes, excellency, and worth is not be
known. And among the vtilities of spiritua
tuall talke this is one, that by the benefit it ca
therof the dignity and excellency of spiritua
tuall things is discovered. An odiferous is no
thing, the more it is handled, the better thing
stronger sweet smell it yealdeth: euen of r
the more often spiritual matters be brought The
into discourse, the more do the hearers receiue
ceiue of the sweet smell of them, and for the suffe
knowne and proued goodnes of them the his f
become the more hartily affected vnto them are l
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But it happeneth much otherwise in cor-
m, as in poral and worldly things, which the more
e more they be examined, weighed, and proued,
in tal the more do they discover & bewray their
ast the imperfections and faults, & therefore allo
h the esse beloued of the wise.

5. The Diuell extremely hateth spiri-
to his uall conferences, & therefore he labourerth
ore co by all meanes to hinder it. For first, that
like an they may not be brought in, he pretendeth
they are troublesome, hard, and nothing
f euer conuenient for the tyme: & if they be once
eemed brought in, that they may not be conti-
at spinued, he suggesteth that they seem disgust-
ed, not full, nothing pleasing, and to be as it were
he fault without life, and pleasure in them. And if
at the the crafty enemy find any, who may trou-
is noble, and disgust the spirituall talke by
of spin laughter, or out of some leuity scoffe at it,
benefit cannot be conceiued, how he reioyceth
of spin thereat. For he knoweth well, that there
liferous is no more effectual way to the ouerthrow-
etter being and taking away of the good custome.
euen of talking of spirituall matters, then that.
rough The hellish serpent is not ignorant, how
arers great a detriment, and hurt he is forced to
for the suffer by spirituall conferences, wherein
m the his snares, impostures, iuglings, and frauds
nto the are laid open and discovered, least any may

through incircumspection and vnwarynes suffer himself to be caught and beguiled by them; and therefore as a theef shunneth the light, so doth he fly from, and detest spirituall talke. But the more they be displeasing vnto him, the more do they please me, and the more profitable be they to the Religious. And should not this, as certaine spurs, put them forwards to loue & serue me thy Lord & Sauour? Moreouer if talke be had of vertue, and other spirituall things, their beauty, and splendour is layd open, which is such and so great, as it must needs procure the wonderfull loue of them, who cast but their eyes vpon it. And what can a Religious man require or desire in this life to do well, then that he be set on fire with the loue of vertues? What thing can befall more dolefull vnto the Diuell, then to see Vertue esteemed, and Vice to be contemned?

6. Tell me now, sonne, what iust cause mayst thou pretend, why thou art not more often delighted with spirituall talke? For if thou be cold, therby thou mayst get thee an heat: if thou wantest deuotion, there is not a more compendious or shorter way for the procuring of it, then by conference had with a pious affection. Further, what

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the cause, why thou dost not lend a willing eare to spiritual exhortations? Whence it is, that when there is discourse about the newes of the world, or matters done by others that nothing belong to thee, thou art so attentiu thereunto: and when speech is had of pious and good matters, thou art either sleepy, or giuest eare with a certaine disgust and loathing? Some againe there be, who vouchsafe not to be present at a spiritual exhortation, vnles some subtil, & high conceit be therein proposed: and others there be, who in their familiar talke thinke, they should discourse and treat of matters far remoued from the common vnderstanding of men. But they are much deceived: for I require no such matter in pious and familiar conferences. But I desire this especially, that whatsoeuer is in them sayd of deuotion, and other spirituall matters, it be easy, and accommodate to practise, and applyed vnto it, and therefore all must rather be directed to the affection, and to the promoting & putting forwards of the will, then to the feeding and delighting of the vnderstanding. Neither is there here either tyme, or place of shewing wit, but of declaration of the desire, that euery Religious man ought to burne with, of
purchasing

purchasing vertue, and of attayning perfection.

7. O how much hurt hath bad custome done, and still doth to Religion. This hath caused a Religious man to be prone and facill to heare vaine & light matters, and to speake idle & friuolous things, and on the other side slow and difficult to heare and speake of pious and good, and of such as agree with his vocation best. And of this those abuses, and defects for a great part haue their beginning, that are to be found in some Religious. It is an hard matter to temper the tongue, and vnto thee thou accustome thy selfe to speake of good things, it will hardly contayne it selfe from treating of vaine and idle matters. True indeed it is, that the fault heerof is not in the tongue, but al is in the hart, that should restrayne it, and keep it in. For the tongue vttereth no more, then what is first written in the hart, and as the harts trumpet, soundeth aloud whatsoeuer is in it. If there be vertue, deuotion, charity, and spirit in it, the tongue speaketh of them: if vanity, secular conuersation, wantones, and other the like, it resoundeth them also, and maketh them knowne vnto others.

That a Religious man ought to be diligent in all his Actions.

CHAP. VIII.

ONNE, a servant, that is diligent not only in his ministry and service, but also in all things, that are appertayning to his charge, cannot but be deare to his lord and maister. And though he trespasse and offend otherwhiles, yet because he hath not forgotten his former diligence, his maister dissembleth the matter and pardoneth him for it. That which causeth the maister to loue his diligent servant, proceedeth not so much of this, that he satisfieth his office and duty, as that he seeth him affected to his wonted service & doth all, not out of a seruile feare, but of loue towards him: for loue is that, which maketh him diligent. Contrarywise a negligent servant is displeasing to the whole family where he liueth: if any thing be committed vnto him, vncertaine it is, whether he will do it, or not, and if he doth, whether he will do it in tyme, and in good sort: whence it is, that his maister cryeth out every houre, and calleth vpon him, is troubled and moued with anger against him,

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in so much, as the negligent man is both afflicted himselfe, and further giueth occasion of affliction to others. It happeneth otherwise with a diligent and industrious seruant: for he enioyeth exceeding great peace and quiet, and because he doth his office stourly, he is cause, that all the family haue their part in the same peace and quiet.

2. A diligent Religious man greatly pleaseth me also, as contrarywise an idle negligent and slouthfull man as much displeaseth me. Yet all those are not to be sayd diligent, who make a ready dispatch of those thinges, that are committed to them to do, but those, who seeke after a perfect manner to performe those things commanded them, neither forbear any labour in doing them. He is diligent, who studieth to do all thinges in their tyme, and as may will is, they should be. He is diligent who what he hath to do, performeth with a promptitude of will, and endeaoureth rather to expect others, then to be expected of them. But the negligent taketh a far other manner of way. For first his study is to do what is commanded in the speediest manner, so he may haue it out of hand, least disgust grow thereon, little caring how well

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well or ill the same be done . He is negligent, who without any iust cause differreth
that from one houre to another that he is
do . Againe, he is negligent and malici-
ous also, who doth of purpose busy himself
in something, or feigneth himselfe to be
busied, least some other thing be imposed
upon him, of which he is afraid . Finally,
that subiect is negligent, who when he is
able and may, doth not for all that so ex-
actly and diligently discharge what is com-
maunded him, as the Superiour expected ,
or would haue wished .

3 . Sonne, it pleaseth me nothing, that
some Religious be diligent there , where
there is no need, and out of negligence to
pretermit that which was necessary to be
done . It is no great matter , if a man be
sometymes slow and negligent in out-
ward thinges appertayning to the body
which is one day to be meat for wormes ,
but if he shew a neglect in matters which
concerne the mind, and the good state and
discipline of Religion, wherby accustomed
service and honour is ycalded me, no little
damage and hurt commeth thereof . And
yet those Religious men offend me much
more grievously, who spare no paynes and
labours in procuring their commodities of
body

body, and their recreations, and be drownd
and cold in promoting, and putting for
wards the workes of spirit. Thou knowest
what my seruant Ieremy sayth, That ac
curled is the man, that doth Gods work
negligently, and fraudulently. If thou can
dilpatch thine owne affaires with expedi
tion and diligence that make to thy profit
wherefore dost thou it not? If the Angells
heauens, elements, and therest of the crea
tures be diligent in thy seruice, wherefore
art thou slothfull & negligent in yecalding
me thy Creatour, seruice and honour?
for the fauour of men, whose good will
and loue thou seekest, thou art forward &
diligent in doing them some seruice, where
fore art thou so slacke in my affayres, for
the gayning of my good will and fauour
who am thy Father & Lord? Iudge thou
now, whether that Religious man deserueth
to be accursed, who doth my work
after a remisse, languishing, and negligent
manner.

4. If the Maister be diligent in procur
ring the commodities of his seruant, euery
with the hazard of his life and goods, and
the seruant on the other side be backward
and negligent in requiting him, will it
not be an vnworthy thing, & intollerable
withall

I shall? I suffered nothing on my part to
 wanting in the procuring of thy soules
 good, and in increasing of thy merits,
 though I were to endure many grievous &
 painful things, to which nevertheless I
 was not bound: and dost thou in working
 well for loue of me, carry thy selfe slowly,
 who art by thy vocation bound to serue
 me? and whatlocuer good thou dost, mayst
 conuert to thyne owne good? Thou shalt
 reinduce thy selfe very much, and greatly
 injure me thy Lord besides, if thou shalt ne-
 ver be diligent in Religion, wherein
 the honour of my Name, and Seruice is
 to be handling. Tell me, if thy Superiours
 were negligent in procuring necessaryes
 for thy meate, drinke, and cloathing, what
 wouldst thou do? & if further they should
 lacke in seeking thy spirituall profit,
 whereof thou hadst a great desire, what
 wouldst thou not do? And if thou shouldst
 with patience endure the one & the other,
 should appertayne to me to chasten both
 negligences. And if it be so, what should
 exempt thee from the like correction, if thou
 be careless, remisse, & slacke in obseruation
 of the statutes of Religion?
 5. More pleasing vnto me is one good
 worke done with diligence, then many
 negligently

negligently performed: for that Religious diligence proceedeth of loue, and euery accompanieth it, and negligence is a defect, growing of the imperfection of loue. And now none can but know, that no worke is acceptable to me, that is not proceeding from loue, and accomplished by it. Againe a worke done with ioy is much more pleasing vnto me, then a worke vnaccompanied with ioy. He that in Religion is diligent in the exercise of good workes, doth them commonly also with ioy, and for this respect the diligent is also more deare to me, then is the negligent. O how am I offended at the conditions of that Religious man, who only vseth a diligence and chearfullnes in doing those things wherunto he is affected, & other things he doth and dispatcheth both drowfily, remissely, and imperfectly. For who seeth not that in that former worke, though he looſeth nothing of his spirituall profit, yet he maketh no gayne thereof at all: for as much as he receiued the hire and reward of his good worke by the taste and pleasure he reaped thereby? And who againe obserueth not that he looſeth in his latter worke, first certaine it is, that it is not inough to do a good worke, vnles it be well done with all

And

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And that Religious man doth it not well,
who goeth about it negligently, and as it
were with an ill will, and an vnwilling
mind.

6. Sonne, I haue scene many, who
though they passed ouer their life very well
in Religion, were neuertheles at the houre
of their death very much troubled with
the reflecting on their owne negligence:
yea and great Saynts and holy men haue
for the same scruple beene greatly afraid
in that their last passage to another life.
And what wilt thou do, who art neither
an holy man, nor yet sure that thou shalt
lead a life conforme to thy vocation, till
the end? And therefore it should be wis-
dom for thee, if thou often renew a dili-
gence, and much more thy loue to God,
of which that diligence proceedeth, if thou
desire at thy death to be free from the fore-
said affliction of mind, and after death to
escape the punishments and paynes of the
other life.

*That a Religious man must not contend
with any, but must intertaine peace
with all.*

CHAP. IX.

SONNE, if thou longest in this banishment to haue a tast of the quiet of the heavenly country, haue a care to conserue peace with three, with thy Creatour, with thy neighbours, and with thy selfe. Thou shalt intertaine peace with thy Creatour, if thou obey his precepts, and conserue thy soule free from sinne. Woe be to thee, if thou takest armes against God: for he that maketh warre vpon hope of victory, killeth himselfe. It is sinne, that moueth warre betwixt God and man, because it induceth a man to repugne, & do against the will of his Creatour. Take away sinne, and thou shalt haue peace with God.

2. Thou shalt intertaine peace with thy neighbours, if thou be humble: for Humility is Peaces mother, as pride is the mother of discord. The humble liueth peaceably with all, and conserueth peace amongst the proud. And though he should otherwhiles be forced to contend, yea and to come to blowes, yet he shall not loose the

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the opinion, and name of a peaceable man, because his will would ayme at peace, and necessity should cause the quarrell, contention, and fighting. Therefore be thou possessed of humility, and thou shalt be loved of all, and not held peaceable alone. Thou shalt keep peace with thy selfe, if thou be mortified, and in what measure thy mortification shall be, in the same will thy peace be also: Many peaces are wont to be made between enemyes, but none goeth beyond that which groweth of the victory obtained by warre. The vnruely passions and desires be the enemyes that molest & trouble thee, & therefore for the obtrayning and compassing of a stable and continued peace, thou must needs weary them out by making a restles warre vpon them, and so get the victory: for if thou shouldst giue ouer the fight, they will not permit thee to enjoy any peace or quiet.

3. I am in holy Writ called the prince of peace, and worthily, because I was euer a lover of peace, and therefore, when I came first into this world, the Angells did sing, Glory in the highest to God, and in earth peace to men of good will. Againe, when I was gone out of this world to my Father, to my Disciples and their successours I left

none other testament, & inheritance, the
 Peace and Charity. Wherefore I acknow-
 ledge not that Religious person, who in-
 tertayneth not peace in his hart, for my
 disciple and heire; but I thrust him out, &
 exclude him from hauing any part in my
 inheritance. Now tell me, who hath
 taught thee to contend in Religion, which
 is my house, and the house of peace and
 concord? Doth it seeme vnto thee reason-
 able, that thou, who hast forsaken the
 world, that thou mightst lead a quiet life
 in Religion, shouldst not only not liue in
 peace, but shouldest further disturbe the
 peace of others? Contentions, and discord
 be most sore and bad Euills, and there
 cannot be greater in the world. And if thou
 thinkest it a great matter, that thou hast
 left the world, thy friends, & all that thou
 hadst, and bringest contentions, debates, &
 dissensions into Religion, thou art greatly
 deceiued. For the Religion cannot do him
 good, who liueth not in peace, and he can-
 not possibly haue peace, who in Religion
 frameth and ordereth not his life according
 to the institute and spirit thereof.

4. Lord, I sincerely acknowledge, that
 contentions do in no sort beecome a Reli-
 gious person, but in this life there be
 many

many toyes and controuerfies, and men be
contentious, as that he who will not
contend with them againe, often loofeth
his right, and is contemned and trodden
under foot by others. Sonne, it is better
without contending to be borne downe by
men, then by contending to be trodden v-
pon by the Diuells. And though all others
should contend, yet none can compell thee
to contend: and if any would peradventure
quarrell with thee, tell him with the Apo-
stle: We haue no such custome. Neither
will there want meanes, whereby thou
mayst hold, and recouer what is thy due,
and right.

5. O how much is that Religiousman
receiued, who because he seeth equity to
stand for him, thinketh it lawfull for him
to contend and go to suite and Law with
another. It is nothing so. For though it
were lawfull, yet it should not beseeme
them, who make profession of perfection
of life, sith I haue taught in my Law, that
a man must rather, for the conseruing of
peace, yeald so, as to him, who should
seek to spoyle him of his coate, for the a-
voiding of contention, he should leaue his
cloake also. Yet there may be disputations,
so they be for defence of the truth, and for

the exercise of wits. A man may also com-
mence Ciuill and Ecclesiasticall suites a-
gainst others, so it be done by the prescrip-
tion of iust and vpright lawes. Those contem-
ptuous actions be only forbidden; that haue repug-
nance with Iustice, which cause discord may
and giue an occasion of hatred: for if thou
vse them, thou plainly declarest thy self
to serue as a miserable souldier vnder the
colours of the infernall enemy, who is the
grand Captayne of all dissentions, and
sworne enemy to peace and concord.

6. Of a bad roote there cannot grow
but a bad tree, and of a bad tree, as
fruits. The roote of contention is pride
for if one should yeald to another, there
would ensue no contention and fighting
& not to haue a will to giue place & yeald
to another, is an argument & signe of pride
But if enuy & malice be added to pride
which is contentions daughter, there grow-
eth a more sore and more dangerous warre
For it often happeneth in the heate of con-
tention, that though a man see himselfe de-
priued of all reason, yet Enuy transporteth
him so far, as because he will not yeald the
victory to the other, he maketh no end
contending at all. And if it happen, that
both of them be peraduenture more head-

strong

also strong, and of a more impotent nature, or
they haue patrons of their owne opinion pre-
script, or els stand vpon their honour and re-
putation, the flame and heat of conten-
tation goeth sometymes on so far, as no help
may quench and put it out, but with the
ruyne of them both.

The fruits of this tree be very per-
nicious to Religion, in gathering wherof,
if there be no vigilancy and diligence
and vied, it is to be feared least within a while
it become full of much infectious fruite, as
grow of hatred, dissensions, murmurations,
as backbitings, vnderminings, reuenges, and
other vices of that kind: neither shall
Religion be any longer the Schoole of ver-
tue, but the sinke of vice, and a re-
ceptacle of Diuells, yea and for the scan-
dall giuen to men of the world, more bad
then hell it selfe. And whereas hell is the
place of torments, and full of miseries,
wherin sinners receiue their punishments,
it induceth no man to sinne, but rather ter-
rifyeth him from committing sinne: but
that Religion in the bowels wherofaigneth
discord and hatred, for the scandall giuen
induceth secular men to sinne the more
greuously. For if a secular man obserue
the Religious to be at contention and iars

amongst themselves, he will thinke, that it is much more lawfull for him to enter into such kind of contentions, & to continue them. But if it chance that secular men do intermeddle themselves, and take part in the contentions and debates of Religiousmen, then the Religion becometh nothing els, then a house and habitation of diabolicall confusion. My Apostles had also contentions amongst them, which of them should be greater, & though their error were not great, nor would haue done much hurt to the Colledge of my Apostles, yet I gaue them to vnderstand that such contention did not a little displease me, and by vsing correction I took away the seed of that discord, and taught them to practise Humility, which is Concord's mother. And I further added this feareful saying: Vnles you become as little ones, you shall neuer enter into the kingdom of heauen.

8. Sonne, if there be any found a loue of peace, and of vnion among Religiousmen, I am he: and if the contentions, and debates of them againe be displeasing vnto any, I am he most of all. And therefore that a quiet, and peaccable life might be led in Religion, besides that which I tooke from

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Myne and Thyne, the beginning of all discords, I caused further, that all their constitution and rules should be directed to the interrayning of peace and concord. But the Diuel hath sown in them the cockle of selfe estimation, which if it be not trodden vnder foote, is the seminary of all contentions, suits, debates, quarrells, and warres.

How a Religious man ought to carry himselfe in his Tribulations.

C H A P. X.

S O N N E, if thou couldst go to heauen without tribulation, or without the suffering of aduersityes in this life, according to the lawes of loue, thou shouldst not wish or desire it, considering I thy Lord entered into it by the way of the crosse, and of tribulation. All the blessed also, who do now enioy most perfect peace and rest, and ioy in heauen, held the same way. Wherefore if thou hast a desire to go any other way, then that of tribulation, thou shalt neuer come to that place of quiet and ioy thou seekest, but of paynes and miseryes, with assured it is, that none can haue his ioy both in heauen and in earth together. If thou

thou wilt in this life be an imitator of the rich Glutton, thou canst not liue in the other, in the company of Lazarus. My selfe proued by many tribulations, carryed my owne heauy Crosse vpon my shouldres, & therby gaue thee sufficiently to vnderstand what way is to be kept to thy country. The Apostle also declared it plainly inough that there is no getting into heauen, but by many tribulations. And therefore to the sonnes of Zebedeus my most deare disciples when they wished to sit one on the right hand, and the other on my left in my kingdom, I sayd, That they knew not what they asked, for that they were first to think of their suffering of tribulations, and then afterwards to speake of the reward thereof.

2. Thou art therefore deceiued if thou thinkest, that there is access for thee to heauen without thy crosse & tribulations: Thou art deceiued, if thou thinkest thou mayst liue without the enduring of aduersities: thou art deceaued (I say) if thou thinkest that thou canst be in Religion free and exempt from all affliction. If outward tribulations be wanting, the inward wil assaile thee, for as much as the bad inclinations, passions and inordinate desires suffer not

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to be at quiet, and free from his crosse.
and though they were away, yet I will
not omit my selfe to send thee for thy soules
good and profit some affliction or other.
wherefore seeing it is certaine, and vn-
doubted, that in this exile the life cannot
possibly be passed ouer without crosses and
tribulations, seeing the life it selfe is a con-
tinuall tribulation, euery Religious man
should in earnest do very well, and best
for himselfe, if he would make a vertue of
necessity, & accommodate himselfe to beare
the crosse patiently, and with a stout cou-
rage. All labour, the more patiently it is
endured, the better and the more lightly is
borne. Whosoever refuseth to follow me
with his crosse, his crosse will follow him.

3. Sonne, what dost thou, that thou
complaynest in thy afflictions, and art
discouraged? Dost thou not see, that thou
makest them the more bitter vnto thee, and
that they torment thee the more? Dost
thou thinke, that for the afflictions that
thou bearest, as thou art able, thou art the
lesse beloued of me? I am not like vnto the
men of the world, who abandone their
friends, when it is their hap to fall into any
calamity, yea I send sometymes tribulations
vnto some, that I may be presēt with them,
when

when they are in their troubles. I do in truth reprove and chastise my seruants the more, the better I loue them, that they may the more perfectly be purged from all the filth of their sinnes, their vertue may be the more strengthened, and beeing so corroborated may be manifested, and made known vnto others. If thou didst but see, in how great an esteeme a good and perfect Religious man is with me, when he is in affliction and misery, thou wouldest wonder, that I do not multiply more and greater afflictions vpon him. For he in that state loo- seth nothing of his spiritual gayne, & more then that he profiteth himself exceedingly, & by his own exāple incireth others wonderfully with a willing mind to imbrace tribulations, and to hold them, as a most singular gift, sent him from heauen. And therefore it often happeneth, that some pious, & Religious man, exercised by such tribulations, is able to effect more, and do more good, then many preachers. Patience manifested by worke, profiteth much more then when it is recommended and preached out of a pulpit.

4. O how much is that Religious man in my fauour, who when any affliction be- falleth him, doth at the very first accept it,

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na particuler fauour of myne, and yea-
leth me most hartly thankes therefore, and
secondly seeketh to reape some profit ther-
by for his soule, by crauing of my help
that he may for the loue of me beare it both
manfully and willingly. And can it be
possible, that I should not help such a Re-
ligious person? Why should I not lend him
my assisting hand in tribulation? Why
should I not free him, and glorify him?
Contrarywise, how much doth it displease
me to see a Religious man sighing deeply,
murmuring, and discontented in the very
last tribulation, as though he had pro-
claimed warre against me? Is not this a
culpable arrogancy? Is not this to take the
sword point in his owne hand? True it is
that tribulation is a sword, but it is to be
taken by the hilt: for he that shall lay hand
upon the point, woundeth himselfe. A
good religious man, who taketh the sword
by the hilt, vseth and handleth it with pro-
fit in cutting off the imperfections and
superfluous desires, and also in driuing all
memyes away from his soule.

5. It is to be confessed that tribulation
is bitter, but it is such bitternes, as is not ill:
neither can it be properly ill, because it
cometh from my heauenly Father, whose
goodnes

goodnes is infinite, and leadeth to the supreme good, as it hath already brought all the blessed, that dwell now in heauen. And seeing I, the Sonne of God, was neuer without tribulation, it nothing beseemeth a Religious man to refuse it for the bitterness that is therein. He, that hath for the loue of me once spoyled himselfe of the pleasures of this world, must in Religion seeke not the pleasure of the senses, but to please the tast of his soule. For if I had refused the bitter cup of my passion, what a state would that haue bene of thyne, and of mankind besides? There are some, who thinke the affliction that they suffer, is ouermuch, yea and to exceed all the tribulations and crosses of the world. But it is nothing so, and more then that, by that conceit and opinion they greatly offend me, because they imagine & feigne me to be a cruel tyrant, who layeth more heauy burdens vpon men, then their forces may beare. I am not ignorant, how much euery one is able to beare: I know also, what may profit or hurt the: but it so hapneth, that to him who hath not been exercised in bearing affliction, the very least misery becommeth great, yea and intollerable also: and he, who hath not proued, or knoweth not

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others calamities or miseries, thinketh his owne greater then theirs.

6. When a man hath not in this life his part in affliction, and all things succeed vnto him as he would desire, it is no good signe: for that whether he be iust, or be a sinner, it is to be feared, that he is reserved for some greater punishment, and that the prosperity of this life is graunted him for a reward onely of the good he hath done heere. When the sicke persons life is despaired of, there is giuen him to taste whatsoever he shall desire. But when a man hath his part in tribulations, it is a good signe. For if he be good, by tribulations he is made better, and as gold, the more it is purged, the more it shineth, and the more perfect it becommeth. If he be in the state of sinne, by tribulations he is awaked out of it, that he may remember himselfe, and by sight of his owne misery looke about him, and repent. The Prodigall sonne, when he was in his flourishing state and in his prosperity, left his father, & when fortune after turned her whele, and want and misery oppressed him, seeing the calamitous state wherein himselfe lined, he returned home to his father. Tribulation oftentimes causeth vnderstanding, when

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prosperity

prosperity bereaueth a man of it. How many be there, who because they be not pressed with any thing aduerse, haue either layd aside all remembrance of me, or shew themselues like vnto those, in whose affection and loue I haue very little interest? But when I shall but once send them the very least ague, or any dangerous infirmity or sicknes, they forthwith come running vnto me, and cry aloud, Sape vs we perith.

7. The necessity, that compelleth men to come vnto me, is healthfull, but yet desired of few, because it is vnknowne. Many be infirme, but they acknowledge not their infirmity, and though they know it, yet they know not what medicine is to be vsed for the remedying thereof. I am the domesticall Phisitian to Religious persons, and know exactly the complexions of all, as also the causes of their sicknes, and make a medicine fitting for the removing and taking of them all away. Tribulation is a medicine, which with the more patience it is receiued, the more effectually and soueraigne is it to cure. This medicine by me prescribed and willingly taken, not only purgeth and taketh away the bad effects of the disease, but also, if it be proportionably

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tionably receiued, purgeth cleane the reliques of all the antecedent indispositions and sicknesses. It is a property of this antidote to search to the root of the euill, and to take it quite away, which is pride: in so much as by humblyng it cureth, and maketh the froward, angry, and terrible, as meeke as lambes. This medicine teacheth euery Religious man, how much he hath profited in Religion, how solid he is in vertue, and how conioyned he is with me, his Creator and Redeemer. Finally tribulation worketh so, as whatsoeuer lyeth hid in the soule, whether it be vertue or vice, it layeth it open to the eye.

8. There is another property of tribulation, that it preserveth a man from future mischiefs. Many haue bene very neare to most grievous falls, but by occasion of some calamity or other sent them, they haue bene preserved from them. I like not of that Religious man, who is grieved, when any sickness, or crosse befaller him. For he should thinke, that infirmity is no lesse my gift, then is health: and how noweth he, that he could serue me better in good health then in infirmity? Whence noweth he, whether it would profit him more to keep his bed, or to wander vp and

downe? How knoweth he, whether by the in
his sicknes he be to be deliuered from grea- the in
ter mischies and dangers, or not? And ward
therefore euery one should permit him- tion,
selfe to my will, and gratefully to accept The e
whatsoeuer I shall prescribe vnto him, and will, i
not to seeke for any other thing then to sed.
make some profit of his tribulations. 10.

9. Sonne, resolue something, sith so canno
long as thy peregrination shall be of con- all thi
tinuance in this mortall flesh, thou shalt be plaine
subject to tribulations. Be thou affected to meth,
any place thou desirest, and to whatsoeuer of the
state of life that may most content thee, that t
thou shalt neuer want aduersity, till thou therof
come to thy country in heauen. Thou must will,
further vnderstand, that seeing tribulation at ano
is a medicine, it worketh according to the much
disposition it findeth, and therefore it mayder, a
sometymes do good, & sometymes againe the pu
hurt. If thou take it with humility & pac the giu
tience, and thanksgiuing, it will profite riting,
if on the other side thou take it with an vn their c
willing mind, with indignation, & coming
playning against him who sendeth it tuerfity
thee, it will greatly hurt thee, and redoubtcerely t
th, affliction besides. For to that which deuoid
happeth and is felt from without, withude, t
come another within, that is, that which creatur
th

er by the inordinate desires cause and produce in
rea- the mind, whiles a man becommeth in-
And wardly moued, and angry for the tribula-
tion, that hath a repugnance with his will.
cept The tribulation, that is taken with an ill
and will, is not diminished, but rather increa-
n to sed.

10. There be some, who when as they
h so cannot complaine of tribulation, as of an
con- ill thing, do transferrè and lay all their cō-
lt be plaint vpon the creatures whence it com-
ed to meth, and say: I make no great reckoning
euer of the tribulation, but I take it in ill part,
hee, that this man or that was the occasion
thouther of, as though one might without my
must will, and permission, receiue tribulation
tion at anothers hands. It is nothing so: for as
o the much as all tribulations happen by my or-
mayer, and I vse creatures one while for
gain the punishing of some, another while for
t pac the giuing vnto others an occasion of me-
rofitizing, and of exercising some vertue. And
n vn their complaint groweth of none other
cometh, then that they may not endure ad-
it tuerfityes. For where they are ashamed sin-
oublterely to confesse it, least they may seeme
vhic denoid of the vertue of patience and forti-
wiltude, they turne themselues against the
vhic creatures, and complaine that they be

ouer sore oppressed therewith, not knowing what way to turne themselves. And such men make it known, that they want both patience and Charity.

II. Tell me, my Sonne, why, when thou lightest vpon a very afflicted friend of thyn, thou dost at the first giue him so much good counsaile, and remedies for his euill, and yet if thou be thy selfe plunged in the same, or like affliction, thou vsest it not thy selfe? Thou knowest how to tel others that they beare all with patience, that they conforme themselves to Gods will, that after tribulation they are to expect consolation, sith the Father of heauen doth not send his any affliction, but for their greater good: And when tribulation visiteth thy owne house, wherfore dost thou not welcome and receiue it with patience? Why dost thou not conforme thy selfe to the diuine will? Why dost thou not reape some spirituall profit by it? He is no good Philisitian, who applyeth not to himselfe, what he thinketh good for others. But this is worst of all, that in tribulation thou art moued with indignation, and sayst; what haue I done? what, I say, haue I done? Put thy hand to thy breast, and thou shalt find, that thou art a sonne of Adam, and concey-

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winged in sinne, and nothing so innocent, as
such thou thinkest. Thou shalt therefore do
both better, if thou sayst; Lord increase my sorrow
and payne, increase also my patience. Burne me
when thou wilt, but cut me heere, that thou mayst spare me for e-
nd of my.

That a Religious man ought to haue a care
of governing his tongue.

CHAP. XI.

MY sonne, the tongue is a little part
of man, but yet of very great power
to do much, either good or ill. I haue giuen
tongue to men, not only to conuerse and
create one with another, but also, and that
most of all for this, that by it they may
praise me, celebrate & extoll my greatnes,
and teach others the way to heaven. And
therefore when a Religious man abuseth it
in discoursing vnprofitably, in murmuring
against his Superiour, in censuring the life
of another, in lying, in ambiguous spea-
king, or with dissimulation, it is a procee-
ding much vnbecoming Religious profes-
sion, and no lesse displeasing vnto me. And
may be sayd of such a one, that he car-
rieth not himselfe like a Religious person,
and that, that is true, which my Apostle S.

James sayth: If any man thinke himselfe to
be Religious, not bridling his tongue, but
seducing his hart, this mans Religion is
vaine.

2. But against this, o Lord, the same
Apostle hath written, that none could eu-
tame the tongue, and that worse it is then
a sauage and wild beast: whence it is, that
the Scripture sayth els-where, that to rule
and moderate the tongue is a gift, that de-
pendeth of thee. And if it be so, what
fault is there on our part, when we permit
it to breake forth into vnprofitable talke.
It is indeed most true, my Sonne, that the
tongue is worse the a raging beast, because
the hurt that such a beast doth, goeth not
further then to the body, but the damage
that the tongue doth, extendeth it selfe both
to soule and body. The beast ordinarily
doth no mischief to the maister who hath
the handling and tending of him: but a
bad tongue hurteth him whose it is first
of all, and then others. It hath neuer been
heard, that one beast hath destroyed a
whole prouince; but the tongue hath ruy-
ned cittyes, and whole kingdomes: and as
my scriptures say: More haue dyed by the
tongue, then by the sword. True it is, that
none can tame anothers tongue, but every

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Selfe to one may rule his owne with the help of
me, but my grace: and further it is true, that the
Religious man, who is of power so to go-
uerne his tongue, as by it he offend not, me-
riteth at my hands great prayse, & no lesse
reward. But this perfection, besides that it
is hard, is almost impossible. It is only re-
quired, and necessary on thy part, that thou
endeavour to bridle & gouerne thy tongue
in the best manner thou canst, and so doing
thou mayst be assured, that thou shalt neuer
want the assistance of my grace. But if thou
giue it liberty & the raynes of thy own wil,
and permit it to vtter vpon euery occasion,
what commeth in thy mind, who should
endure the blame of these thy tongues faults
but thy selfe, and thyne owne neglect in
restrayning it?

3. And if thou desire in particuler to
know, touching what care a Religious
man should haue of his tongue, I say first,
that he must keep it from speaking much:
for so much as certaine it is, that there can-
not want sinne, where speech is vsed. He
that speaketh much, considereth not what
he sayth, and by that occasion he speaketh
and vttereth many things to smal purpose,
and therewith vnprofitable also. And this
is that, which the Sage meant to giue vs to

vnderstand, when he sayth, That fooles sayth
 haue their hart in their mouth: because
 they speake whatsoeuer commeth in their
 mind, in so much as their hart seemeth to
 depend on their mouth. But on the con-
 trary, the wise and circumspect hath his
 mouth in his hart, because he considereth
 and premeditateth what he hath to say, &
 by that occasiō maketh the tongue to haue
 dependance on the hart, and not the hart
 on the tongue.

4. In the second place the Religious
 man must forbear to speake ambiguously
 & doubtfully, or in a dissembling manner.
 For sith the life of a Religious man ought
 to be simple, and without fraud: euen so
 must his speech in like manner be round,
 open & without any dissimulation at al.
 It should be a matter reprehensible euen in
 Pagan, much more in a secular Christian
 man to vse a doubtfull speech or Equiuoca-
 tion to deceiue another, and to haue one
 thing in hart, and another thing in mouth:
 how much greater fault then should it be
 in a Religious man, vpon whome is imposed
 an obligation to labour to perfection. And
 more then this, he that vseth such manner
 of speaking, maketh himselfe ordinarily o-
 dious, if we beleue the Wise man, who
 sayth:

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Boole sayth: He that speaketh sophistically, make
cause he himselfe hatefull to euery one. It then
thei thou offendest me by this dissimulation or
th to Equiuocation of speaking, how is it possi-
con- sole that I should loue thee, or giue thee any
h his countenance? Or that I should yeald thee
reth, the assistance of my grace? And if this ma-
ay, & seth thee hatefull to thy neighbour, how
haue it possible, that thou shouldst help him,
harer do him good? For none trusteth him
with whome he hath lost his credit.

gious 5. In the third place a Religious man
ously must beware he speaketh not what is vn-
anerue. Neyther must thou thinke it inough
ught to forbear lying that hurteth another, or
n so that which is asseuered or confirmed by
und, oath, which be mortall finnes, and where-
al. It into not only many secular persons, but al-
in a so many heathens would haue a care not to
stian fall: But a man must further abstaine from
oca- all manner of lying that is spoken in iest, or
one for pleasure, to another, for that God is
uth: offended therewith: and euen the very least
oe in offence of God is to be auoyded with all
osed possible diligence, though there should o-
And therwise follow some great good, as is to
nner haue the neighbours life or soule. We must
y o- neuer choole a bad means, wher by to come
who to a good end, and therefore euery Religious
yth: man

man should rather endure whatsoeuer damage and hurt, euen death it selfe, then that a lye should come from his mouth. He is no good Religious man, who is not friend of truth, neither is he a friend to truth, who maketh no scruple to lye euen in a light matter. Amongst secular persons to tell a lye, is an act so base, & infamous, as for a lye they chalenge one another into the field. And lyars are commonly held for vile, base and contemptible, and for such, as are denyed vnworthy to be belieued. What then may be thought touching a Religious man, that is a liar? To whome may we resemble him? It can not be sayd, that he resembleth me, who am the truth it selfe: it remayneth then, that he be sayd to be like vnto Sathan, who in my Scriptures called a liar, and the father of lyes.

6. Moreouer tell me, my sonne, is it not a great infamy to one, that credit is not giuen him, though he speaketh the truth? And yet this is the paine & punishment of a liar. For if he should lye but once, though he loose not all his credit, yet he maketh himselfe at least suspected, that euery one may stand in doubt, and that with reason whether he speaketh what is true, or whether

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er doer he may belecue him, or not. And if
, the be a thing reprehensible to lye, treating
th. About temporall matters with men, what
is not will it be to vtter what is false in thinges
friend spirituall? What will it be to lye to his Su-
to lye rior, or to his ghostly Father, who
ecula to hold my place?

& in 7. O how much do those Religious
e and en displease me, who hearing another
monk sayed, seeke to stayne such his commen-
, and ation some way or other, or to obscure it
be by putting some (But) in the way, or by
t toucmembring some one or other imperfe-
lyar tion of his. And if such persons would
t can iligently search out the roote of this fault,
no an & vnderstand whence it hath the origen,
, that they would endeauour, I am sure, to bridle
ho their tongue, and amend their fault. For
he fa in some this fault ariseth of a bad inclinati-
on they haue, and of a certaine pleasure &
, is i contentment they take in censuring the life
is no and actions of another. In others it pro-
ruth seedeth of enuy, by which they are sory of
ent o their neighbours good renowne, and ther-
ough fore they seeke to obscure it, or to diminish
aketh it by their bad reports of him. In some a-
y one gaine it hath the source of pride, and of a
ason perswasion they haue, that by obscuring
wher others praises, they shall increase their
ther owne,

owne, and make themselues to appeare greater, & better then those, who be prayed. To abuse others, is not the way for a man to raise himselfe: for it is no vice, but vertue that rayseth a man, in so much as where the rootes be so bad, & so venemous it is an easy matter to thinke, that the speech which proceedeth thence, cannot be but bad, and venemous also. And therefore, my Sonne, thou must haue a vigilant care neuer to diminish the commendations or actions of another, as also not to exaggerate, and commend the same with too much amplification, for as much as the one and the other is a vice of the tongue, that displeaseth me.

8. Those also are displeasing vnto me, who in their speech take a contentment to bite and sting another, and to say in one word, haue no scruple to vexe, and molest their brethren. Neither charity, nor the rules of Religious modesty teach, that any should take his pleasure with the displeasure and molestation of another. This is a thing worthy of blame euen in a secular person, and therefore much more in a Religious man. A man may sometimes be merry and pleasant in his conuersation, and vse some witty discourses, which yet must be in time and

nd place, without the offence or discontent of any.

9. And the tongue, which is without the bridle of vertue, stayeth not it selfe here, but it passeth easily further to murmure, and to report ill of another: and it seemeth vnto it selfe oftentimes to haue found a sufficient and good excuse to say, that it is in a light matter, and that the finnes be not grosse, that be spoken of. As though it were not any sinne to murmure of light matters, and that it were not an offence as well to God, as to the neighbour. O peruerse tongue, and worthy of double punishment! the one for speaking ill of another, the other for excusing thy fault, in saying, that it is no great matter. It is not any light matter, or such as importeth not much for a man to perseuere and continue in what is ill, though it be little. He that excuseth his sinne, hath not any care to amend himselfe. I haue not any where sayd, that a man might murmure in light matters, but I haue on the contrary forbidden it, when I commaund, That euery one should loue his neighbour, as himselfe. When another murmureth of thee, is it not true, that thou bearest it with an ill will? Thinke thou also, that others take it in ill part,

part, when thou murmurest of them, be-
sides that thou offendest me, and thereby
doest against my will.

10. Moreover the good opinion, that
is had of the persons, and especially of this
Religious man, profiteth much to the hear-
ing of the neighbour: but the murmur-
ing, and detracting tongue obscureth the
good opinion, and consequently hindreth
the fruite of good example, and the light
of good edification, that might be giue
vnto others. And more then that, by such
discovery of the defects and imperfections
euen of them, who haue the reputation
good & vertuous persons, is an occasion
scandall, being a thing vndoubted, that
those, who are yet feeble and weake, he-
ring mention made of the imperfections
of the good, come easily to contemne them
and which is more, are animated to com-
mit greater faults themselues. And if
tongue that murmureth of secular persons
be not excusable, and greatly displeaseth
me, how may that tongue be excused, that
murmureth of my seruants? What will it
be to murmur of Superiours, who occupie
my place? What will it be to impute
vnto one an imperfection, which he haue
not, thereby taking an occasion to murmur

m, beand speake ill of him?

therci 11. The good Religiousman doth re-
straine not only his tongue from all detra-
ction, and murmuring, but also stoppeth
of this cares, when he heareth the like from
he he another, and if it happen, that he heareth
murmuring against his Superiour, he
eth defendeth him in what he can, seeking to
ndrehide, & excuse the imperfectiōs that might
e light in him. For thou must, my sonne, per-
give swade thy selfe, that both the honour, and
by such the injury thou dost to thy Superiour, re-
fection doundeth to me, and that I will be the
ation Iudge either for thy punishment, or for thy
ation reward: O how much are those deceiued,
d, the who hauing receaued some discontent at
ke, he the hands of their Superiour, do complaine
fection and murmur at him, affirming, that he
e them hath wronged them. Who hath made such
o comen their Superiours Iudges? What law
d if it commaundeth them to reuenge themselues?
er son if the Superiour hath done amisse, in what
please booke haue they found, that they may ther-
ed, the ore murmur at him, and repay one euill
will with another? Certes they haue not lear-
ho oned this lesson of me: for I do teach the
impugne quite contrary, to render good for ill, & to
he haue overcome the bad turne with a good one.

urmu 12. There is another vice of the tongue,

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no lesse pernicious, then be the precedent, not
 and that is, to disclose some secret that a thou
 man should not, and which should be con- thy t
 cealed. And what is worst of all in this the g
 kind, is, that there be some, who by a cu- maun
 rious importunity, and wylie craft seeke to expect
 draw some secrets from another, that they the s
 may afterwards communicate the same gaine
 with some other very familiar friend of dispe
 their own. And in this the faults be many thou
 they commit. For first there is in it curio- That
 sity, secondly a sinne to induce another to prof
 discover that which he should keep secret
 thirdly another sinne in reuealing that
 which he hath receaued as a depositum, to
 be kept secret. Finally, of it there groweth
 many debates, quarrells, hatreds, discon- M
 tents, many ill and hard words, and other for w
 the like inconueniences. Seest thou now refuse
 my sonne, of how many euills a naughty or the
 tongue is the cause, and that it is not with it any
 out ground, that my Apostle S. Iames call again
 leth it an vnquiet and turbulent euill, full in gre
 of deadly poyson, and a fire that consumeth healt
 all that it layeth hold on? But tell me that I
 wherefore thinkest thou, that the tongue of it:
 was shut vp within the mouth, as it were troub
 in a close chamber, & kept in with the teeth is disp
 and lyps, as with a double rampire, if it be to per
 no

dent, not to giue thee to vnderstand; that when
hat a thou shouldst haue a will & desire to moue
con- thy tongue to speake, reason must first open
n this the gate, as one that hath the charge & cō-
a cu- maund ouer it: and that when it should be
ke to expected, that it be retyred and silent,
they the same reason must shut vp the ports a-
same gaine to keep it in: for els the tongue will
nd of disperse the poyson, and do more hurt then
many thou canst thinke, or imagine.

*That a Religious man ought to make his
profit of all corrections and admonitions.*

C H A P. XII.

MY sonne, what may be expected from
him, who being sore sicke, should
for want of vnderstanding his owne will,
refuse the medicine that might cure him,
or though he should take it, should not keep
it any long tyme, but cast it vp presently
againe? Such a one questionles should be
in great danger of his life. Correction is an
healthfull medicine, though few there be
that know it, and very few haue practisc
of it: but because it is somewhat bitter and
troublesom, thereof it commeth, that it
is displeasing to them, who haue no desire
to perfect themselves, though it be to cure

them, and to promote them much in spirit and in perfection. This medicine, as all others, must be proportioned to the complexion of the infirmed person, and is to be giuen in tyme, when the humors be prepared, and when the sicke person shall be either at quiet, or lesse troubled. And to the end the sicke person may take it with a better will, he must first of all make himselfe capable of his euill, of the danger he findeth himselfe in, and of the great ease he may receaue by the medicine.

2. The Religion, that maketh no vse of this sort of remedy, canot long conserue it selfe, and it is an exceeding great fault in the Superiour to forbear to correct his subiects, and to permit them to liue at their owne will, for feare of displeasing them. The sicke, that liueth after his owne manner, becommeth rather worse then amendeth. Since the corruption by sinne, human nature is so inclined to euil, as if there be not an eye had to help and repaire it by admonition and correction, it will soone fall into some ruine, or other. O what an accompt shall Superiours haue to make, for feare of making themselues hated, or for feare of discontenting, or for some other human respects, omit to correct their inferiours.

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inferiours. They should perswade themselves, that the defects of their subiects, which should haue been amended by their correction, shal be imputed vnto them. But much worse shall be the condition of the inferiours, who being admonished by their Superiours, become troubled and discontented, and do take the correction, which is so profitable and soueraigne a medicine, for an iniury done them: whence it cometh, that being vnworthy thereof, they cease not murmuring against their Superiours: which is nothing els, but to murmur against me, whose will it was, that such correction should light vpon them. But what hope is there of amendement in such persons, when they become worse, and add one fault to another? What good may be expected from them, when they will not acknowledge their fault, and eyther refuse correction, or if they receaue it, they presently reiect it with a disdain? Vnhappy is he, who hideth his wounds, and much more vnhappy he, who hath no desire to procure the cure of them.

3. Tell me, my sonne, whence is it, that thou art so troubled, & so sore moued, when thy Superiour blameth thee? Seest thou not, that so to do, is to take the knife

by the edge, and therewith to giue thy selfe a wound? Seest thou not, that by so doing thou conuertest the medicine into poyson, which I had ordained for thy good, and for the healing vp of thy wounds, and thy euill disposition? Is not this to say in plaine termes to thy Superiour, that he aduise thee no more, nor giue thee any correction, because thou wilt not beare it? And what other thing is this, then to fauour thine owne euill, and to refuse cure? Not to haue a wil to be reprehended, to speake properly, is to haue a will to go from ill to worse, which is neither thine owne good, nor the good of Religion, nor that which thy Superiour may in conscience do, or suffer.

4. But let vs consider a little, wherefore thou art so much troubled for being reprehended. Is it because thy Superiour blameth thee for a fault thou hast not done, or that it is nothing so great a one, as thy Superiour hath made it? or if for that thou thinkest thy selfe to haue been wronged by them, who haue made report of the matter vnto him, and thou wouldst peraduenture haue the same examined, and proued by witnes, and that finding it false & vntrue thou wouldst haue him punished, and to make thee satisfaction, who hath made the

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report to thy Superiour? My sonne, this is not the way to perfection, neither is it the proceeding of Religious persons to examine or to confront witnesses, nor to debate matters by proceſſe of Law. For so to proceed, were to multiply debates and contentions, to trouble & disturbe peace, to open a gate to much hatred and discords: and when I did in my Gospell deliuer the manner of fraternall correction, I did not giue precepts or instructions of any such manner of proceeding. It is a course both better, and more beſeeming the Religious man, to overcome by way of Humility, then by way of debate, and contention. O how much haue some of my seruants gayed and profited, who being reprehended by their Superiours, euen for some fault they had not done, receaued the reprehension as comming from me, and perswaded that I was he who blamed them by the mouth of their Superiour, humbled themselves, without further debating the matter wherewith they were charged, and committing all to Gods providence craued pardon, yea by so doing much edified their Superiour. And of this it came, that the good opinion that was before had of them was so far of from receauing diminution,

as it was thereby much increased, and the
 did continue withall much more enriched
 with merits. And notwithstanding this,
 appertained to me to cause the truth to be
 after discovered, and to come to light for
 the manifestation of their vertue.

5. My sonne, it is in thy will to con-
 uert correction much to thyne own profit
 whether thou hast committed the fault
 wherof thy Superiour aduiseeth or blameth
 thee, or hast not done it. For if thou hast
 done the fault, this correction will serue
 thee for a purgation, and help to cancel
 & raze out the fault thou hast committed.
 If thou hast not done the thing, thou mayest
 vse it for a preseruatiue medicine, & it will
 put thee in mynd to stand vpon thy guard
 more, and better then before tyme, giuing
 thee an occasion of conseruing thy vertue
 & innocency. And this is the true meanes of
 making profit of correction, namely if thou
 receaue it as a medicine comming from
 me, and such as I haue ordayned for thy
 good.

6. There be others who complaine not
 so much of the correction, as of the man-
 ner wherewith it is vsed towards them,
 saying that the Superiour is ouer harsh in
 his reprehensions, and that he exaggerates

teth

seth anothers fault ouermuch . He that
would haue euery thing after his owne
fancy, hath many discontentments, and li-
ueth in much disquiet of mind . So the
medicine may do thee good , to what end
shouldst thou trouble thy selfe, whether the
potion be sweet, or sower ? My sonne,
hast thou a desire to liue in peace ? Leau-
e that, which concerneth thy Superiour, &
thinke of that alone, which toucheth thy
selfe . To haue an eye to this, that the cor-
rection be founded in Charity, that it be
done without choller, & without disdain,
that it be proportioned to the fault, that it
be done in tyme, that the inferiour con-
ceaueth that which is done, be done out of a
desire of his good , all this appertaineth to
the Superiour, and not to the inferiour: but
to haue a care , that the correction be re-
ceaued humbly with patience , and a will
to make his profit thereof, that toucheth
the inferiour . But if the inferiour wil per-
uert this order , and haue his eye rather v-
pon the manner wherewith correction is
to be done, then how he ought to admit it,
it will not be well with him, no more then
it would be with the Superiour, if he
would haue an eye rather to the manner of
taking correction well , then to giue it,

in a manner fitting, and for the good of his subiects. He easily committeth an error, who thinketh not often, and seriously on that, which concerneth and importeth him to do.

7. My sonne, if thou hast a desire to amend, loue correction, for so much as it is a good & assured meanes therunto. Thou knowest not thyne owne faults, or if thou doest, thou knowest them not, as thou shouldst. Thou perceiuest not how offensive they be to anothers eye, how is it then possible, thou shouldst amend them? And correction is that, which giueth thee vnderstanding, and knowledge both of the one, and the other. The Diuell hateth correction, and in the Religious labourerh to worke an auersion from it, for that he well knoweth the great good which they may receaue thereby towards their aduancement & progresse in perfection. O how do those Religious men please me, who do not only willingly receaue correction, and seeke to make their profit therof, but do also desire some one or other of their friends to put them very often in remembrance of their faults, and imperfections, whereinto they may hap to fall. He that desireth not correction, nor that he be

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told of his faults, giueth to vnderstand, that he hath not any forward disposition to amend himselfe.

8. Others there be, who may not endure to be admonished, or reprehended by him who is not their Superiour, and they do not only not take it in good part, but do further conceaue an indignation against him, and deeme him for a man troublesome and importune. Consider I pray thee, my Sonne, how far Prideleath a man, when it causeth him to be discontented, and angry with them who exercise towards him an office of Charity, in putting him in mind of his faults, for which he hath iust cause to render him thanks. But it may be, that such persons thinke themselves irreprehensible, and be so conceited of themselves, that all they do, is well done, or that they are discontented to be reprehended by their equalls, though in the mean while they know wel inough, that themselves are faulty. The one and the other cannot proceed of any thing but pride, and to say truly, he is such a one, and of the number of those Religious mé, who haue no will to practise either Humility or Mortification. The poore man, who knoweth his own need and necessity, taketh

taketh willingly the almes of any one, whosoever it be, that giueth it, be he master or seruant, and humbly thanketh him for it: the very same doth euery Religious man, who hartily desireth perfection, and loueth euery one, who helpeth him to the attayning therof.

9. Correction and reprehension is an act of Charity: and as Charity is common to all, so may euery one vse a modest reprehension, and he who omitteth to do it, when he ought, and hath an hope of doing good by it, though he be not a Superiour, doth not well, & displeaseth me also. How much then shall I be displeased, and how much greater shall that mans sinne be, who knowing an imperfection of his brother, doth not only not admonish him touching it, but also commendeth him for it, saying that he hath done very well, and that he did as he should do, therby inducing an imperfect Religious man to become more bold, and to confirme himselfe the more in his imperfection. And this we may affirme to be the pestilent oyle of sinners, wherof the Prophet speaketh: and vnhappy is that Religious man, who hath his head annoynted therewith. I do my selfe the correction otherwhiles, and send inspirations, to
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the end my seruants may by that occasion find out and discouer their owne imperfections, and amend them : sometymes againe I admonish them by some affliction or other, that they may enter into themselves, and correct what is amisse : sometymes I permit one whole order of Religion to be afflicted & persecuted, that the negligent and bad Religious men, that are or may be in it, may become good, and the good better: but the end indeed is, that they haue a desire to be holpen. They want not the helps, and meanes of doing well so much, as a firme resolution to put themselves into a course of doing well, and to hold on the same, as they ought. My sonne to differ and put that off till the morrow, that may profit thee to day, is not an argument or signe of a man well aduised. And the more thou shalt neglect to amend thy selfe, and to differ this happy resolution, the more, and the greater will thy losse be.

How a Religious man ought to carry himselfe in his scruples.

CHAP. XIII.

MY sonne, thou knowest well, that to please me, and to receiue a recompence

pence from my hands, it is not inough to they
do a good work, but it must be done well the D
That one, for feare of offending me, stan- whic
deth vpon his gard, and endeaureth to de- men
all the best he can, this is to do prudently and t
neither must he thinke this to be a scruple all.
but a filiall feare, a iust feare, and an holy 3.
and meritorious feare. They be scruples, I defin
when one is in his actions perplexed, and them
full of anxiety, without hauing any law- right
full cause thereof, but only by light con- thy p
icatures and suspitions ill founded, and that file of
he feares that he sinneth in the thing that conti
he doth, or that he hath done, or that he wher
ought to do: whence it commeth, that he anch
afflicterh himselfe, and continueth altogea- as litt
ther troubled in mind. These scruples, ples, e
which be no other (to say truely) then into,
vaine and fearefull imaginations, displeas true k
me very much, and be in the soule of him bling
who is seized and taken therewith, as if thy fo
were with an hoate and burning feuer, tend t
which tormenteth him both night and them,
day.

2. Wilt thou vnderstand, my Sonne, in with
few words, what is the nature of scruples? scrupl
when he, who is molested with them, re- per lo
tayneth them in mind, and stayeth vpon great
them, when he should contemne them, ouer
they

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gh to they are vnto him as many ropes, by which
well the Diuell bindeth him, and draweth him
stand which way he listeth: but when he con-
to de tempteth them, he standeth firme and stable,
ntly and the enemy hath no power ouer him at
uple all.

holy 3. Lord, these scruples displease me:
uples I desire nothing more, then to be rid of
d, and them, but it is not in my power. I know
law right well, my Sonne, that it exceedeth
t con thy power to shake of the scruples that a-
d that rile of a melancholy complexion, & which
g that continue as long, as continueth the cause
at he whereof they proceed, and that is the me-
at he melancholy humour it selfe. Againe thou art
ogea as little able to free thy selfe from those scru-
ples, that I send thee, or permit thee to fall
them into, to the end thou mayst enter into a
please true knowledge of thy selfe, or for the hū-
him bling of thee, or for the better purging of
, as in thy soule, or for thy greater merit: for as I
euer send these scruples, so it is in me to remoue
t and them, and I take them away, when it best
pleaseth me. But thou mayst well (assisted
ne, in with my grace) ease thy selfe of those
uples scruples, that haue their beginning of pro-
n, re- per loue, when by occasion of the ouer
vpon great affection to thy selfe thou becomest
them, ouer anxious, and art more afraid, then
they thou

thou shouldst, least some inconuenience, impediment may befall thee, for the doing of what thou hast, or oughtst to do. The good Religious man ought to be circumspect, and haue an eye to himselfe, rather by a desire to please me, then for feare of any trouble, or paine to himselfe. In like manner it is in thyne owne power to discharge thy selfe of these scruples, that are occasioned by the suggestiō of the enemy, the end thou mayst be there afraid, where no cause is of feare at all: and these scruples be nothing els, but a vaine apprehension proceeding from meere fancy.

4. O how much damage do scruples cause, and how much good do they hinder. For first they deprive the person, who is molested with them, of that inward peace which every one ought so much to desire. seeing without it a man can neither haue any true deuotion, nor do any meritorious act. And more then this, they marre, and ouerthrow the complexion of nature, and trouble the humours of the body: whence hath hapned, that many by such scruples haue broken their braynes, and some haue made themselues vnprofitable both for themselves, and for Religion. Scruples cause a man to loose his tyme, that might otherwise wil

otherwise be imployed in profitable things
and in good workes. For how much tyme
doth a scrupulous man loose in saying one
prayer, or in reading of a psalme? He begin-
neth againe and againe, he repeateth what
he hath formerly sayd, and neuer maketh
an end, and which is worse, when he hath
all done, he remaineth lesse satisfied, then
he was at the very first: and if it happen,
that notwithstanding all this, he maketh
no more repetitions, it is rather in regard of
a certaine yrkomenes, and loathing he find-
eth, then out of any perswasion to him-
selfe, that he hath satisfied what he should
do. Againe the scrupulous doth not only
loose his tyme himselfe, but he further cau-
seth the losse thereof to his Superiour, or
to his Ghostly-father, with whome he con-
ferreth touching his scruples, and if they
yeald him the hearing, it will be long be-
fore he make an end, and the more a man
condescendeth to a scrupulous person, the
more and greater will be his hurt.

5. Scruples make the scrupulous
man stiffe and obstinate: for where a vayne
fear of offending, and of not satisfying
predominateth & beareth ouermuch sway
in him, thence it commeth, that he yeal-
deth not, nor obayeth very easily, and that

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 he will not condescende to his Ghostly
 Father, or Superiour, & so he becommeth
 headstrong, and euer retayneth these his
 scruples. Scruples cause the scrupulous
 man not to consider his Creatour, as a good
 and louing Father, as he should do, but as a
 seuerer exactour, and a rigorous iudge of his
 actions: and this consideration of his fil-
 leth him with so many vayne feares,
 and so great, as he seemeth to himselfe to be
 already in the very torments of hell. My
 sonne, thou dost very iniuriously to deale
 with me in this sort: I haue not created
 thee for thy damnation, but for the glory
 of heauen, and I desire nothing els, but thy
 good, and thy saluation. I haue for the sa-
 uing of thee endured a thousand paynes &
 miseryes all my life long, and therefore my
 will is, that thou bid adieu to this vaine
 feare, and that thou from henceforth con-
 ceive of me, as of a good, and mercifull Fa-
 ther, desirous of thy soules good.

6. And if thou hast a desire to rid thy
 selfe of this malady, and not be scrupulous,
 there be three thinges for thee necessary.
 The first is, that thou be not thyne owne
 phisitian, and be resolu'd to giue credit to
 thyne owne aduise and iudgment. A Phi-
 sitian, be he neuer so learned, and experi-
 enced,

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enced, is nothing fit to ordaine a medicine for himsele, when he hath any sicknes, and much lesse shall the scrupulous man be fit: whose passion and imagination being stronger, and more vchement then any fever, or paine or body, troubleth him in such sort, as it robbeth him of all his iudgment, and causeth him to see and take one thing for another.

7. The second thing necessary, is, that thou follow the aduise of thy spiritual father, or of thy Superiour, though thou be otherwise of a contrary opinion. And to the end thou maist accomodate thy selfe with the more facility thereunto, thou must perswade thy selfe, that I am he who gouerne the Religious in their scruples, and that I gouerne them by the mediation of their Superiours, and therefore thou must be perswaded and hold for assured, that the counsaile, which they shall giue thee in thy scruples, commeth from me. And indeed I could not well deale with them in any other manner. For if the Religious man haue, out of a desire to serue me, forsaken both parents & friends, very reasonable it is, that I serue them also for father and mother, for kin and friends. If flying from the world, they haue cast the-

selues into my armes, reason it is, that I embrace and receiue them, and serue them for their refuge. If they haue made their election to depend of me for the confirming of themselves all in all to my will, meete it is, that I assist them with my direction, and counsaile, and that they admit it, as comming from me, what they shall aduise them in that behalfe.

8. The third thing that thou must obserue, is, to obay thy sayd spiritual Fathers, and to execute and do with a promptitude what they shall say, & this is so necessary, as if it be not kept, all the rest will not profit thee a whit. For what would it helpe to ordayne a medicine, and further to be perswaded, that it is prescribed by an excellent Phisitian, if the patient and infirme person will not vse it? My sonne, take heed of Sathan, who for the hindring of many of thy good workes seeketh to trouble thee with many scruples, and to fill thy head with infinite anxieties, and vnstayed and running thoughts. I know that he maketh thee anon to say, or thinke in thy mind, who knoweth whether my spirituall Father be not deceaued in commaunding me to do this, or leaue that? It may be, he hath not vnderstood me, or that

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I haue not sufficiently explicated my selfe. I am in doubt, whether this counsaile which he giueth me, be not rather to comfort me: and which is more, that in himselfe he thinketh nor, that I haue offended God, and that I shall be damned. All such thoughts arise of a vaine and false feare caused by the enemy, who troubleth the water, for feare thou shouldst see the truth. But seeest thou not, that though thy spiritual Father should deceiue thee, thou art not for all deceaued in obeying him, for that thou oughtst to obey him in all thinges, where there is not apparence of any manifest sinne. And more then that, to thinke that he hath not well vnderstood thee, ought not to trouble thee, sith it ought to be inough for thy satisfactiō, if he say, that he hath vnderstood thee well: for thou art bound to beleeue him. In like sort, to thinke, that thou hast offended me by thy scruples, and that I will damne thee for them, is a thing, that must be far removed from thy imagination. He that hath so many pledges and testimonyes of my loue and benignity, as thou hast, hath a good occasion to put his trust in me. If thou hast a firme purpose not to offend me, and rather to dye, then to commit a mortal

sinne, this being a true signe of thy saluation, and of my amity, wherefore fearest thou? And he who feareth this, is not afraid to offend me.

9. Neither must the desire that thou feelest in thy selfe, of making a generall confession, for feare, or doubt, that thou hast not made it well, trouble thee. If thy spirituall Father iudge it neither necessary nor profitable, but rather damageable, thou must content thy selfe with that, which he telleth thee, and obey him: for if there should be any fault, it should not be imputed vnto thee. For a man to repeate his confession without necessity, is to multiply his scruples. The Confessour who yealdeth vnto the scrupulous, by his importunity what he should not, doth not well discharge his office, and hurteth the scrupulous, and being an occasion by that means vnto him of more scrupulosity then before. For the more doubtles, is taken away in so doing the more do they still entertaine & increase the scruples. So to mone and turne the earth without sowing seed thereon, is to cause that bad weeds spring vp in the place. Tell me, when thou madst thy last generall confession, didst thou not then satisfy thy conscience? If thou sayst thou didst, and that

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the Priest gaue thee Absolution of thy
sinnes, wherefore makest thou any doubt
now, if thou didst then confesse all? If
thou madst thyne examine as thou oughtst?
If thou hadst a sufficient sorrow for thy
sinnes? For a man may iudge better of his
confession then when he made it, then he
can a long tyme after. If there had beene
any default in it, thou shouldst rather haue
perceaued and found it out then, then
now.

10. My sonne, remember that it is long
that thou hast been troubled with scruples
and that because thou hadst a will to go-
uerne thy selfe by thyne owne fancy, thou
art not yet cured and eased of them, but fin-
dest thy selfe more disquieted and troubled
then euer before, and therefore euen human
prudence would require, that thou shouldst
change the remedy, and that sith thou art
sicke, thou be not a Phisitian to thy selfe.
And therefore thou must resolue, that for
the curing of thy scruples, the best remedy
is to belecue and obey thy spiritual Father.
And in that thou must diligently take heed
thou come not vnto him with a certaine
artificiall skill, and an intention to draw
him to thyne owne will by importunity,
or otherwise; for that were euer to returne

to the same, and to haue a will to be thyne owne phisitian in thy scruples, and to procure to be gouerned by thy spirituall Father conformably to thyne owne fancy, wherein there should be a double fault: for that besides thyne, thou shouldst cause thy spirituall Father, or Superiour to fayle in the discharge of his office. Thy spirituall Father is a meanes wherof I serue my selfe, and he is myne instrument, not thyne, and therefore he must be moued by me, and not by thee. The thing which appertaineth vnto thee to do, is to leaue him in his liberty, and considering him, as one who holdeth my place, to haue an hope, that by meanes of him I will not fayle to direct thee for thy greatest good.

That a Religious man must flye Curiosity.

C H A P. X I I I I.

MY sonne, I see thee ouer diligent and curious in searching out the knowledge of noueleyes and strang things of the world, wherein thou giuest to vnderstand, that thou hast not yet giuen ouer thy affectiō & loue to it, in so much as thou art not yet wholly dead vnto it. If thou hast so abandoned it, as thou shouldst not haue

any

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any thing to do with it, whence is it that curiosity maketh thee to inquire after what is therein done, and what is layd and passeth? What hast thou to know and vnderstand that, which concerneth thee not, and that bringeth not any good to thy soule, but damage rather? Thou hast more then often tryed, that the news of the world which thou hast heard, occurreth to thy mind in thy prayer, in the tyme of Masse, and other good exercises. How much better course did those good Hermites take, who because they might not vnderstand, or know what passed in the world, withdrew themselves into the wilderness, and there hid themselves in holes vnder the ground?

2. Curiosity, sith it is an inordinate desire to know, is reprehensible, & repugnant to the rule of right reason, but much worse is the roote whence it commeth. If a Religious person were well affected to matters diuine and spiritual, he would not be curious to search into thinges humane, that touch him not at all. Curiosity ordinarily ariseth of the little affection, that men haue to the works of vertue, and therefore it greatly importeth the Religious mā at all tymes to haue employment in some

profitable and commendable thing or o-
 ther, though the same be not inough to
 withdraw him wholly from curiosity. For
 as it is attractive, it causeth a man oftentimes
 to leaue euen profitable occupations,
 and therefore the Religious must not only
 busy himselfe in things of profit, and such
 as agree with his profession, but also ap-
 ply his mind and affection therunto, and
 so doing he shall shut vp the dore against
 curiosity, and therewithall free himselfe
 from many disquiets and troubles of mind.
 But when curiosity is in the Religious
 man accompanied with idlenes, or light
 employments, then she keepeth holy day,
 because she well knoweth how to find en-
 trance, when she listeth, being the property
 of idlenes to set open both his dores and
 windowes: & she no sooner getteth in, but
 that she forthwith setteth the senses at liber-
 ty, which be her messengers, and sendeth
 them forth to search out noueltyes, on
 which she afterwards causeth the inward
 powers of the soule to reflect, and to buyle
 their iudgments, and castles in the ayre,
 wherby it appeareth, how much curiosity
 is repugnant to the Religious state, which
 requireth that all the senses be brought in
 subiection and mortified, and that they

haue

have not the liberty to wander where they should not, and when it appertaineth vnto reason to guide, and direct them, and not curiosity.

3. Marke my sonne, the craft and policy of Sathan, whereby he induceth the Religious man to open the gate of curiosity. First he putteth in his thoughts, that it is good for him to vnderstand the disasters & tempets of the world, to the end he may render vnto me the more condigne thanks for hauing brought him into the quiet & safe harbour of Religion: and to the end, that hauing a better & more perfecte knowledge of the sinister, and miserable euents of the world, he may the better vnderstand the felicity of the state whereunto he is called, and from how many troubles and dangers he is deliuered: finally to the end, sayth he, he may haue a compassion, and be moued to pray for the poore of the world, who are so sore oppressed, and afflicted in the world, as euery good Religious man is bound to do. But to take all this at the best, it is nothing els, but to deceiue vnder the appareance of good: and what is of it selfe vicious and bad, cannot be a meanes to the producing and doing of good workes. Therefore curiosity being a sinne, it is nothing

thing conuenient to make vſe of it for the doing of good. And my Apoſtle hath plainly and expreſſly ſayd, that no euill is euer attained to be done vnder the hope and pretence of any good. But that which the Diuſery pretendeth, is to induce the Religious man to affect and give himſelfe to curioſity, knowing right well (as he is wylic, and crafty) that hauing once drawne him to curioſity, he will neuer compoſe himſelfe neither to the exerciſe of the ſayd good works, nor of any other. And in this lyeth his deceit, to make ſhew to haue a will to induce thee to the doing of good, to the end he may go away with the victory to thy damage and loſſe.

4. A iuſt man muſt euer hold the love and beneuolence of an enemy ſuſpected: that for the rendring of thanks vnto God for the happy ſtate of Religion, and praying for thoſe of the world, is it not neceſſary to enquire curioſly about that which paſſeth in the world. For without it a man knoweth inough touching the ſtormes, ſerua miſeryes that the poore ſecular perſons endure: for as much as ſuch miſeryes begeth, or not to day, but haue been heretofore, and ſhall alway be. And more then this, Religion hath ſo many gifts, priuiledges and graces

fortresses, as of it selfe it giueth a sufficient
th plowledge thereof, without necessity, for
is eue attayning & getting of such knowledg
ence enquire curiously about the news, and
Diuiscryes of the world.

us may. Harken my sonne, now to another
iosity ceite, wherof Sathan serueth himselfe by
e, and eanes of curiosity. In the beginning he
him discontented, that the curious loose his time
himselfe reading, or hearing read vaine and cu-
d good booke, in vnderstanding the news
is lyet at passe in forraine countryes that touch
will him nothing at all, in hauing I know not
to the what faire and curious thing, and the like,
story but he stayeth not there. For passing fur-
ther, he labourerh to induce and draw him
he know, & see what is not lawfull, & euen
ted: that wherin there is danger, be it a thing
God that prouoketh to the sinnes of hatred, re-
rayingenge, or impurity, and in fine he seeketh
lary to moue him to do all openly without any
h shadow or pretense at all. And this is
a man, when the curious person, for the vn-
derstanding of secret and hidden things de-
sires enhaundeth and enquireth them of the Di-
begger, or of some other who hath commerce
e, and with him. And what good doctrine can
e, Relone learne of the Father of lies? Or what
ges any fruite or learning can be drawne or gotten
grace out

out of so vnhappy a schoole?

6. Curiosity is a vice, which cannot be easily shaken off, as a man would thinke. The elder a man is, the more increaseth his curiosity, and thence it is, that a man is neuer weary in hearing of news. Curiosity that moueth a man to enquire of another's affayres, causeth him to forget his owne and himselfe also: & he who runneth to the houses of others, and leaueth his owne, is in danger at his returne not to find all that he left at his going forth. The curiosity, that prouoketh the senses to fasten themselves vpon curious & impertinent things, maketh the curious to stumble and fall, & that oftentimes very fowly. Who is apt to fall of himselfe, he will fall much more easily, being thrust by another. And such mans nature is so debilitated by sinne, as we see, & experience in our Iesus, the very least occasiō, as may be this of curiosity, is inough to precipitate it. My sonne, hast thou a desire, that curiosity should not giue thee any occasion of ruine by thy senses? Let there not on thy part any occasion be giuen of abusing them. For if thou seruest thee of thy senses for thy pleasure only, and not for necessity, or for profit, it will be an inuitation to curiosity, and an occasion vnto it of abusing

sing

ing them in vanities. If thou lend thy
aring to all, and lookest vpon all that
mmeth in thy mind, who seeth not, that
o do is to put the bridle of thy senses in
o curiosities hands, that it may turne and
wind them which way it pleaseth? Haue
care to thy senses if thou desire, that they
ould be sollicitous to preserue and keep
thy hart from all vanity.

*That a Religious man ought to flye from
all manner of Ambition.*

CHAP. XV.

MY sonne, a good Religious man, and
prudent, doth euer and anone lay
before his eyes the end, for which he hath
left the world, and entred into Religion,
which is to serue me, who am his Lord,
in a more perfect manner, then he did in
the world, and thereby the better to assure
the sauing of his soule. And more then
that, he thinketh vpon the meanes of attai-
ning this end, which be vertues, mortifi-
cation of the passions, abnegation of
himselfe, contempt and hatred of all,
which the world loueth and imbraceth.
Besides this, he thinketh on that, which is
an impediment of comming to this end,
and

and such be vices, of the number wherof
ambition Prides daughter, which doth not
only diuert the Religious man from
seruice, but also maketh him to entertain
an opposition against me. And therefore
where ambition is an inordinate appetite
and desire of worldly honour, necessary
is, that it be quite banished out of Religion
because Religion is a schoole opposite
that of the world. And if the Religious
man be come out of the world, and haue
already beene at defiance with it, is it be-
seeming vnto him to seek worldly honour
in Religion? None can be a scholler in
two contrary schooles.

2. Heare my sonne, what ambition
teacheth in the schoole of the world.
teacheth the schollers to seeke after honour
and reputation, to desire preheminences
dignities, to procure great charges, office
and titles of greatest honour. But in the
schoole of religion the custome is to teach
the contrary, and I am the maister thereof
as willingly & patiently to put vp wrong
to beare reproaches, dishonours, infami-
ties, ignominyes, to shunne preheminen-
ces and dignities. This is my liuery, this
the doctrine, that I haue alwayes both
taught, and practised. When the Iewe

came

came with scepter and crowne vnto me to make me their King, I ranne away: but when they came into the garden to apprehend me, and to bind me as a theef, to conduct me before an earthly Iudge, I did not only not runne away, but I also went forth vnto them, & willingly deliuered my selfe into their hands. The seruant is knowne by his Maisters liuery, and the scholler by that which he learneth.

3. O my soule, what shal we do heere! Thou seest that thy Sauour is wholly contrary to the world, as the world is contrary to him. Thou seest that their schools be altogether opposite, their liuery, & the way which they trace & hold, most different, & therefore either the world must needs be deceyued in seeking after honours, or our Sauour in flying and contemning them. And because our Sauour, who is the wisdom of the eternall Father, cannot be deceyued, it followeth, that it is the world that deceyueth it selfe in it owne ambition, & all those who take pleasure in the vain ty of such smoakes. And therefore if we haue not a will to be of the number of them, and not to be deceiued with them, we must tread all vaine, & worldly honour vnder foot, and with the ignominy of the

Crosse follow our sweet Saviour, who is our conductour and guide to true glory.

4. But tell me, my Saviour, if thou hast created me for glory everlasting, that is accompanied with the greatest glory and honour that can possibly be, wherefore dost thou forbid me to seeke after honour, and glory in this world? If thy Apostle hath left written, that he who desireth a Bishoprike, desireth a good worke, wherefore should it not be lawfull for me to desire titles of honour?

5. My sonne, remember, that thou wert not created for an earthly glory, but for a celestial, & none can hinder thee from purchasing this. On the contrary, I am displeased to see, that any should busy his mind with the glory of the world, for that of heauen. As touching that saying of my Apostle that thou alleadgest, thou must know, that to desire a Bishopricke, to trauaile & take paines for the sauing of soules, is a commendable thing, and an act of charity: but to desire it for the honour and dignity that is annexed vnto it, or for the temporall commodity which a man may receaue thereby, is neither good, nor expedient. In the primitiue Church the Bishoprikes were without honour, and riches

and

and were accompanied with much paine and trauaile, in so much as he who desired a Bishoprike at that tyme, desired by that occasion to trauaile and take paynes in the Churches behalfe, and to become a martyr for my sake: and therefore then to desire to be a Bishop, was a good and holy desire. But since the time, that the Bishopricks began to haue preheminences, honours, and riches annexed vnto them, such a desire cannot be without many dangers: & thereof it commeth that my Apostle, to giue to vnderstand, that it was not lawfull for euery one to aspire to such dignities, added presently after, that a Bishop must be irreprehensible, not contentious, but sober, chaste, and charitable. Thus thou seest, my sonne, that these dignities haue more burden, then honour, and thou shalt do a great matter, if thou canst guide thyne owne soule without meddling with the governing of anothers. For if there should not be any other thing besides this consideration to say, that a Bishop must be irreprehensible, it would be inough for the instruction of any man of meane iudgment.

6. Moreover the difference, that is betweene him who becometh Religious, and him who taketh the charge of a Bishoprike,

prik, manifesteth the same. For he who entreteth into Religion, entreteth in for the attaining of vertue and perfection, but a Bishop entreteth into his charge to exercise perfection, and to teach vertue vnto others, not only by words, but much more by example of good life, and therefore he must euen then be perfect, and he must haue vertues not only in expectation and hope, but in effect also. My sonne, suffer not thy selfe to be misled, and abused by the enemy, when he putteth into thy head, that when thou shouldst be promoted to any dignity, or prelacy, or when thou shouldst be a Superior, thou wouldst serue me better, and wouldst do many more and better good workes: for as much as in such dignities both the obligation bindeth more, and the occasiō of falling be much greater in those conditions, then in other. And if thou mayst not acquire thy selfe in lesser obligations, how wilt thou discharge thy band in greater? If one little and light occasion maketh thee to fall easily, what will it be in a greater? Remember, that it is a lesse euill to fall from a low place, and that he must not presume to take vpon his shoulders a great & heauy burden, who seeth himselfe apt to fall vnder a light one. But if thou

hast

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hast a will not to be deceaued in this case, obserue what I shall tell thee. First neuer intrude, or present thy selfe to any dignity or prelacy: secondly neuer desire nor seeke them, but rather shunne them, vnles thou be comanded by him who may bind thee to accept them, or that the necessity were such, as in the iudgment of thy spirituall Father, charity should bind thee to admit them for the common good, and my greater seruice.

7. A man may easily know by the properties of Ambition, how repugnant it is to a Religious state. There is not a vice that dissembleth, or disgusteth, as doth Ambition, and therof it proceedeth, that it is worthily called hypocrites and adulations mother. Ambition, for the attayning of any office or dignity, maketh a semblance and shew, that it is possessed of many vertues, wherof it hath not the very least part, or any thing at all. With how many colours setteth it forth her owne actions, to make them to be esteemed worthy of that it desireth? To whome doth it not crouch, & bow the knee, that it may haue audience, and treat with him, at whose hands it standeth in hope of fauour? It euer liueth betweene feare and hope

or compassing that, which it pre-
 tendeth, and therefore needs must it be alwayes
 vnquiet: the sleep is euery houre interrup-
 ted and broken with cares: the repose is by
 peece-meales, it still eateth with anxiety,
 it is in despaire, when he at whose hands it
 expecteth fauour, shew it a bad counte-
 nance, or looke awry vpon it: it is puffed
 vp and swelleth with pride, when he loo-
 keth merily vpon it, or giueth it a good
 countenance, in so much as there is not a
 sea so troubled and tossed, as is the hart of
 an ambitious person. He honoureth all
 the world, he maketh a thousand promises
 to euery one, he maketh semblance of lo-
 uing all. And what haue these, and the
 like ceremonies, which be nothing but
 vanity, to do with the Religious state,
 which exacteth true Humility, sincerity,
 and entiere Charity, which be capital ene-
 mies to ambition? What hath the Reli-
 gions man, who retyreth himselfe from the
 world, for the leading of a quiet life, to
 meddle with ambition, that is accompa-
 nyed with so many troubles, and disquiet,
 and putteth the soule into so great danger?
 O how much better vnderstanding haue
 some of my Religious had thereof, who
 that they might not be constrained to ac-

cept

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reprehended them of dignities and prelacies, that were
wayes presented them, got them out of the cit-
trumpets into some desert or wilderness, yea &
is by some of them hid themselves in sepulchres,
ciery, that they might not be found. And if they
nds it came thither to seek them out, & that they
unreforced them to take and accept of such di-
uffed duties, they gaue to vnderstand by the a-
eloo abundance of teares, that fell from their
good ye, with how ill a will they amitted the.
not a 8. But Ambition stayeth not heere: for
re of king come to one dignity, it must aspire
h all and mount vp to a greater, vntil it get vp to
niles the last, and highest of all. And this is that,
of lo whereof I reprehended the Pharisees, who
d the for the glory of the world desired the first
but seats in the Synagogues & feasts; & all ho-
rate, norable salutations in the streetes. This
rity, is not the way that leadeth to Religious
enc Perfection, but rather to blind a man with
teli the smoke of the world, and that in such
the sort, as he become starke blind, that he
to neither see any more the end of the iourney
pa which he intendeth, nor the way how to
er, come to it. So the Religious man must be
ger? attentive to that, which their Superiour
haue shall command them, and they must per-
who swade themselves, that he who preacheth,
ac- or teacheth in chaires of more note, be not
cept those,

those, who do what pleaseth me best, neither profit their neighbours most, or merit the most for them, but he who laboureth well with most humility, and greatest charity. He that taketh paynes for loue of me, seeketh nothing els, but what may content me, but he who taketh paynes to get himselfe fame, & reputation among men, hath selfe-loue the proper motiue vnto himselfe for the getting of the highest seate, and the places of most honour. And when it happeneth, that matters succeed not with so much honour to them, & applause as they desired & expected (as it often falleth out) a man may see such manner of men afflict themselves, to be vexed, & to cast the fault I know not vpon whome, & they consider not, that it is a punishment of God, sent vnto them for their ambition and pride. The sinne of Ambition doth not consist in enioying the preheminance of places but in desiring to haue them, & afterward to liue very proudly therein.

FINIS.



CERTAINE
ADVERTISEMENTS

to Religious men,
For the leading of a vertuous life in Religion, and for the better obseruation of their Rules.

GOD sayth by the mouth of the Prophet Jeremy: What is it, that my Beloued hath in my house done much wickednes? As though he meant to say more expressly: I haue good occasion to complain, in seeing that my creatures haue so sore offended me, but that those whome I loue most, and whome I nourish in Religion, as my house-hold seruants, and familiar friends haue so highly offended me, and make no reckoning neither of their institute they haue imbraced, nor of the Vows whereunto they be bound, nor of the obseruation of their Rules, nor of profiting

and going forwards in the way of perfection, is a thing intollerable, and not to be borne withall. And if God may not endure to see this abuse, meet is it that we be sorry also, and therewith also endeauour to find out a way & meanes for the remedying of so great an euill by all possible industry. And to this purpose it will profit vs to meditate and often to reuiue these points following.

1. Consider first, my sonne, how rigorously God did punish the sinnes, that were committed in the holy places: as in the person of Lucifer, who was for his pride thrust out of heauen and cast downe into hell: in the person of Adam & Eue, whom he banished out of the terrestriall paradise for their disobedience: in that of Dathan & Abyron, whome the earth swallowed vp aliue: in that of Ananias & Saphyra, who fell downe dead at S. Peters feet for lying vnto him. Consider these examples, and feare thou also, least he punish thee in body or soule, or at least for the sinnes thou hast committed in Religion, he abandon thee cleane. Therefore make thou from hence forth this resolution, & firme purpose, that thou wilt keep all thy rules and lawes of Religion, for feare least God lay his heavy
and

and rigorous hand vpon thee.
2. Secondly consider, what our Sa-
uiour sayth of the tree, that did not beare
any fruit: Cut it down, to what end occu-
pieth it place in the ground? He commaun-
ded it to be cut down, being against reason
it should take the place of another tree that
would beare fruit. If our Saviour would
give so rigorous a sentence vpon an vnfruit-
full tree, what would he haue done, if it
had borne fruit infectious, imppoysoning,
and deadly? Thou art that barren tree,
that in Religion dost in vayne occupy the
place of another that would serue God
truely, and as it should best beseme a Reli-
gious man. Thou art the vnfruitfull tree,
that bearest none, but the fruits of death, &
of many sinnes: and for this thou hast cause
to feare, that God will with the axe cut
thee down, & remoue thee from the place,
where he hath so mercifully set thee, and
plant another for thee, who shall serue him
Religiously, and shall beare fruit to life e-
uerlasting. Therefore my sonne, read thy
Rules often, obserue them exactly, be ser-
uent in thy vocation, and endeauour to go
forwards from one vertue to another, to
the end our Lord may gather the fruit, that
he desireth, of thee, whome he hath by so
singular

singular a priuiledge planted in the vineyard of holy Religion.

3. Thirdly consider, that all the holy inspirations, spirituall helps, and all the ordinances & rules of Religion be given by God for this, that the Religious seeke to perfect themselves in his seruice: and therefore thou must thinke, that doing the contrary, thou wrongest God, and iniurest thy selfe very much, and hast iust occasion to feare, least he will pronounce this dreadful saying, mentioned in his Prophet Esay, against thee: In the Land of the Holy he hath done wicked things, and he shall not see the glory of our Lord. As though he should say: I haue given thee a place, in an holy place, amongst Holy ones, to the end thou shouldst become like vnto them. I haue for the same end prouided thee of all possible commodities, and so many good inspirations, lawes, ordinances, and rules for thy better help, and the more perfecting of thee in my seruice, and all these helps thou hast abused, and hast been so far from profiting & going forwards in my seruice, as thou art become worse. And what will be the end of all this? Because thou hast abused all these helps that I haue given thee towards thy increase in vertue, thou shalt

not

not haue any part in my eternall glory.

4. Fourthly consider, that the sinne which is committed against any Vow is much greater, and displeaseth God more then do other sinnes. A Vow imposeth a greater and straiter obligation of seruing God, and therefore when the fault is made in that behalfe, the sinne is the greater against God. And more then this, thou must perswade thy selfe, that al which thou yfest for thy meate and drinke, cloathing or otherwise, whether thou hast it of the Religion wherof thou art an vnworthy member, or otherwise by way of almes of well disposed persons, turneth to the sinne of fraud, because thou defraudest & deceauest thy Religion on the one side, in not obseruing the rules therof, and on the other side thou art vnworthy, and incapable to pray for them, who bestow such almes vpon thee. For our Lord vouchsafeth not to heare thy prayers, so long as thou shalt omit to obserue what thou hast promised him.

5. Lastly consider, how seruient and earnest a desire thou hadst to serue God, when he did first call thee vnto Religion. And if euen now notwithstanding thou be intangled in so many sinnes, and affections
of

of the world, thou yet feelest in thy selfe
 so hury and earnest a desire to aspire to per-
 fection, whence is it, that being in so holy
 a place, amidst so many and excellent helps
 and meanes of profiting to perfection, thou
 art so miserable, cold, and negligent? And
 if thou answer me, that thou art indeed a
 grievous sinner, but thou entrest into Re-
 ligiō to be good, whence cometh it, that
 after so long tyme of thy being, & of tray-
 ning vp in this schoole of vertue, thou see-
 mest to be so far off from thy first desires, and
 from that which appertayneth to thy pro-
 fession? And therefore my sonne, be ashamed
 that thou art so imperfect, & make a firme
 resolution to returne to thy first seruour,
 and to an exact obseruation of thy rules, &
 of thyne Institute, that thou mayst from
 this tyme forwards serue God in all loue,
 and holynes, as meet is thou shouldst do.

*Certaine Considerations, that may help to
 the obseruing of the Rules in Religion.*

TH E first is, to read them often, and to
 meditate the forementioned points
 euery moneth once, or more often, to the
 end by such meditation thou mayst stir vp
 in thy selfe a desire of obseruing them. And
 to conceiue a firme purpose neuer to infringe

or

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or breake any Rule whatsoeuer, vnder pre-
sence that it importeth little, or is not of
any consequence, will help much there-
unto.

2. The second is, to desire thy Superi-
our, and all the other Religious persons of
the house to reprehend and admonish thee
freely, as often as they shall see thee to tras-
gresse against the Rules, or to commit any
other fault, which thou seest not thy selfe.

3. The third is euery, moneth to do
some voluntary pēnance, either in secret, or
in publique by the permission of thy Supe-
riour, for the faults that moneth commit-
ted against the Rules, and good desires and
purposethat God hath inspired thee with,
accompanying it with a good desire and
firmer resolution to obserue them better for
the tyme to come.

4. The fourth is, that thou haue a par-
ticular affection to the obseruation of thy
four vovwes of Pouertry, Chastity, Obedi-
ence, and Enclosure, keeping them with
more care, then thou wouldst most pre-
cious stones. And to the end thou mayst the
better affect them, read or meditate the
aduertisements following.

of

*The Mirrour of
Of the vowes, which the Religious make,
and first of Obedience.*

THOU must obey thy Superiour perfectly for the loue of God, & consider that hauing the vertue of Obedience, thou shalt together with it haue the other also: and especially for this, that by it our Saviour did redeeme the world, that was ruined by the contrary vice of disobedience. And therefore cease not to make petition to his diuine Maiesty, that he please to grant thee, to know and vnderstand the importance, merit, efficacy, and perfection of this vertue, that knowing it thou mayst be the more stirred vp to plant it, and procure it to increase in thy soule.

The Religious man that desireth to be perfect in the vertue of Obedience, must be perswaded, that the voice of the Superiour, when he or she commaundeth any thing, is nothing els, but the very voyce of God, and when he vnderstandeth the signe of doing any thing, he must thinke that it is God who calleth him. And then he must leave off all other busynes, and instantly go about that whereunto he is called: namely when he is called to the Quire, to Masse, to prayer, and to other thelike spirituall exercises.

cises. The good & obedient Religious examineth not whether that which is commanded him, be well or ill commanded, but obeyeth promptly, readily, and without any murmuration in all things where there is not any manifest sinne.

Of the Vow of Chastity.

I Need not to tel thee of the vow of Chastity, sith it is cleare and manifest, how perfectly it ought to be kept, & sith it hath two cōpanions & sisters, that never depart from her side. The former is a certaine holy Bastitutes, which may worthily be called the keeper and intertayner of Chastity, as that which defendeth and preserveth it against all stayne of dishonesty. The office of this Bastitutes is to cause that the eyes be kept downe, and cast vpon the ground, and to cause the Religious person to conceite an horroure of seing, & of being seen. And if peradventure she should be forced to speake, or to suffer her selfe to be seene, she esloones covereth her face with an honest blush, the testimony of the care which she hath of the purity of her soule. To be short, this Bastitutes causeth her to be modest in her gestures, in her going, and in all that she doth, and by that occasion conserveth

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the vertue of Chastity in her perfection.

The other sister of Chastity is a Purity of hart, by meanes whereof the soule becommeth so exceedingly affected to this vertue, as it conceiuerh not only an horrour at the very least dishonest thought, but also at euery inordinate affectiō to whatsoever creature, euer carrying a chaste hart to her Spouse, and holding it for spirituall adultery neuer so little to separate her affection from him.

Of the Vow of Pouerty.

AS touching the Vow of Pouerty, I would haue thee to be carefull to content thy selfe with the only vsage of things that shall be vnto thee necessary, and to make a conscience of vsing them as thyne owne, for feare least vnder the colour of necessity thou become in tyme a Proprietary. Therefore thou must not giue any thing vnto another without licence of thy Superiour, nor in like manner take any thing without leaue, though it should be otherwise necessary. Thou must neuer haue any money at thyne own disposition, whether it be in thyne owne hands, or in anothers, least the Diuell deceaue thee, and vnder the pretence of necessity induce thee to violate thy

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thy vow of Pouerty, and by so doing cause thee to incurre the danger of eternall damnation for not keeping thy promise made vnto God. And because this vice of propriety is wont to raigne in the negligent, and carelesse Religious, thou must marke certaine points, which may serue as antidors for the dryuing of this affection far from thyne hart.

Consider first, that this is a greater sinne, then it is to cast off the habit, or to go from one Couent to another, which yet is held for a very scandalous thing. It more importeth the Religious to keep the three essentiall Vowes thereof, and in particuler the vow of Pouerty, which is as the wall and rampier therof, then to weare such an habit, or to liue in such a monastery. If then it be so great a sinne to returne to the habit of the world, and to cast off that of Religion, or to runne from one monastery to another; what then thinke we, shall it be to vse any thing as our owne, and to breake the vow of Pouerty, which conserueth Religion in her integrity.

Consider secondly, how great a scandal thou giuest thy Religious sitters, yea & sectular persons, and how thou detamest thy Religion in as much as is in thee, besides

that, in so doing, is to robbe and steale, by keeping, or giuing that which is not thine. For that which the Religious may gaine by her industry and paynes, or that which is giuen her, whatsoeuer it be, is not hers, but the communityes. And this theft is so much the greater, because it is committed in that which appertayneth to the Church, to an holy place, to the poore, and to Gods seruants: and of this it cometh that the sinne of propriety is called sacriledge, and consequently worthy most grieuously to be punished.

Consider thirdly, that the pretious stone, wherof our Sauour maketh mention in the Ghospel, is nothing but Pouerty, and that thou hast bought it with the price of all thy goods, in forsaking Father and Mother, brethren and sisters, and all thine other friends, all thy pleasures & commodities, and more then all this, thy owne selfe also. And draw out of this an holy confusion, that thou giuest all againe for a thing of nothing, which thou doest when thou vsest the things, that are giuen thee as though they were thy owne. Acknowledge thy owne fault herein, and remember, that thou canst not haue any greater treasure, then holy Pouerty, for that in it

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is found the Creatour, and Lord of all
things.

Consider fourthly, how foolish and
ill advised that man should be, who being
escaped out of the dangers of the sea, by the
help of a good ship wherinto he had got
himselfe, he should fill it with water by
little and little: for so doing he should in
cōclusion sinke the ship, & drown himselfe
withall. Thinke then thou dost the same.
For being escaped out of the sea of this
world, and got into the ship of holy Reli-
gion, and resuming the thinges which
thou hadst formerly forsaken, for the satis-
fying and fulfilling of thy own will, is no-
thing els, but more shamefully to ruine thy
selfe, then thou wouldst haue done in the
world. And therefore acknowledge thyne
owne blindnes herein, & haue nothing to
do with this so dangerous a vice of propri-
ety: lay hold vpon thy most sweet Saviour,
dying naked vpon the Crosse, and to that
purpose renew thy vow of Pouerty, which
thou hast formerly presented vnto him, with
all possible seruour and affection, as thou
didst when thou first madest it.

THAT thy Enclosure which thou keepst may be pleasing to God, & profitable to thy selfe, thou must keep it of a pure and free wil, for that the Religious person who keepeth it not but in body, & in will runneth all the world over, besides that, that she neuer inioyeth true repose, looseth all the fruite and benefit of her Enclosure. Consider my child, how many graces thou hast receaued by the meanes thereof: how many occasions thou hast auoyded of offending God: yea & into how many sinnes thou wouldst haue fallen, if it had been in thy liberty to go forth at thy pleasure: and it may be, that if thou hadst not been debarred of thy liberty in this behalfe, thou hadst been peradventure euen now tormented in hell fire for all eternity. God hath deliuered thee from these, and other like dangers not to be numbred, by the meanes of this thy Enclosure: & for this thou hast most iust cause to loue it. And seeing thou hast made a promise of it to God, thou must keep it exactly, to the end thou maist merit, and make thy profit thereof.

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Of the Ioy, which the Religious ought to
make upon the day of their Conuer-
sion, and what Ioy it ought to be
unto them.

IT would be good to haue a particuler
dedication of thy Vows, that is to say, that
euery yeare thou make a festiuity of the
Day that thou didst enter into Religion,
and madest thy vowes. For as we euery
yeare celebrate the day of the dedication of
a materiall Church: so ought we in like
manner, and with more iust reason keep
solemnne the day of the dedication of our
Soule, which is the liuing Temple of the
Maiesty diuine. And for the well effecting
thereof, thou mayst practise, and do these
three thinges.

1. In the first place, thou must make a
generall Confession of all the yeare past.

2. In the second, thou must offer thy
selfe anew to God, to serue him in perpetu-
all Pouerty, Chastity, Obedience, and En-
closure, being sory for not hauing, for the
tyme past, perfectly kept that which thou
hast promised him, and for hauing profited
so meanelly in vertue, and in his holy ser-
uice.

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3. Lastly

3. Lastly thou must take new hart, & new forces, renewing thy holy purposes, and thy first desires and seruours, returning to thy exercises intermitted, and endea- uouring to perfect thy selfe in them. Fur- ther, thou must see if thou canst by the grace of God, find out any other meanes, more proper, and easy for helping of thee to put in execution all that which thou art to do, and in particular thou must haue at all tymes this desire to renew thy selfe in the vertue of prayer, and in the exercise of all other vertues. O how would this festiuiity, and celebration of this thy Conuersion, & day of entring into Religio, haue profited thee, if thou hadst done it as thou shouldst. But thy own sloth and negligence hath beere an occasion, that thou hast omitted to vse the meanes, and helps, that God hath af- foarded thee. And therefore pray thou instantly, that he would please to pardon thy passed faults, and to giue thee grace to do thy endeaour better for the tyme to come.

FINIS.



THE
RELIGIOUS MANS
LOOKING-GLASSE,
Or a short way of attayning to Perfection in Religion.

I

The principall study of a Religious man.

1. **T**O deny himselfe.
2. To roote out Vices.
3. To plante Vertues.
4. To dye to himselfe, and to the world.
5. To loue God,

II.

*What is necessary to obtaine peace
of the mind.*

1. To desire and seek what is most humble
and abiect.
2. To keep silence.
3. Not to contradict.
4. Not to intrude himselfe.
5. With indifferency to accept all things at
Gods hand.

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III.

III.

A Religious man must exercise himselfe continually.

1. In Humility, and Charity.
2. In Patience, and Mortification.
3. In Reading, and Praying.
4. In Meditation of the life of Christ.
5. In Communication with God.

IIII.

Things specially to be avoyded by a Religious man.

1. The familiarity of Women.
2. Singularity and proper iudgment.
3. Selfe-will, and selfe-loue.
4. Idlenes, and the care of the belly.
5. Pride, and Vaine-glory.

V.

What a Religious man must do at home, and in his Cell, or Chamber.

1. To thinke God to be present, and to see all thinges.
2. To withstand the suggestions of the Diuell.
3. To read, and study how to do, and liue well.
4. To stir vp himselfe to Prayer and Meditation.

5. To

Looking-glasse.

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5. To arme himselfe, that he may go forth
with safety, and profit.

VI.

*The office of a Superiour towards
his subiects.*

1. To loue all alike.
2. To be watchful that Religious discipline
be obserued.
3. To be exemplar himselfe vnto al.
4. To instruct, and correct in spirit of lenity
and mildenes.
5. To pray to God for all.

VII.

The office of a subiect towards his Superiour.

1. To loue him, as his Father.
2. To honour him, as his Lord.
3. To heare him, as a Doctor or Teacher.
4. To obey him, as Christ himselfe.
5. To pray to God for him.

VIII.

*A Religious mans office and duty
towards his brethren.*

1. To loue them all in our Lord.
2. To hold them all for his betters.
3. To admonish them in Charity.
4. To support them with Patience.
5. To edify them by good Example.

IX

IX.

What is to be done in the morning early.

1. To arise speedily at the tyme appointed.
2. Forthwith to present himselfe in Gods sight, and seruice.
3. To giue him thanks for that nights preservation.
4. To conceiue good purposes.
5. To craue help and grace for the due execution thereof.

X.

What is to be obserued about Prayer, and Meditation.

1. To prepare the mind, and the matter.
2. To expell Thoughts which diuert, or hinder vs.
3. To perseuere therein with Constancy.
4. With an humble hart to follow the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.
5. To be sorry for the defects committed therein; and to giue thanks for the good successe, if any hath beene.

XI.

What thinges are often to be handled, and thought vpon in Prayer.

1. The Knowledge of our selues, and sorrow for our sinnes.
2. The

1. The foure last thinges of man.
2. The benefits of God.
3. The life, and passion of Christ.
4. Conuersion with God, and his Saints.

XII.

What is to be obserued about Confession.

1. To examine our Conscience well.
2. To be hartily sorry for our sinnes.
3. To confesse our sinnes entierly.
4. Earnestly to purpose amendment of our life.
5. Forthwith to fulfill the pennance inioyned vs.

XIII.

What is to be obserued about the Sacrifice of the Masse.

1. To cleanse the Conscience first by Confession.
2. To come vnto it with an humble, and contrite hart.
3. With reuerence and deuotion to offer it vp to the glory of God, for himselfe, and for the Church.
4. To communicate with a spirituall hunger, and Charity.
5. To go away with thanksgiuing.

XIIII.

What is to be done after Masse.

1. In hart to hide himselfe with Christ.

2. To

1. To offer himselfe all that he is, or can be to Christ.
2. To lay open his owne, and others necessities vnto Christ.
3. To aske of Christ many thinges for himselfe, and for others.
4. To desire & long after eternall Happiness.

XV.

What is to be obserued in saying Office.

1. To purge the hart from whatsoeuer other thoughts.
2. To procure deuotion.
3. To attend to the sense of the words, and to God.
4. To speake the words distinctly, and perfectly.
5. Not to make hast to come to an end.

XVI.

What is to be done about the Examen of the Conscience.

1. To aske light of God.
2. To giue thanks for his benefits.
3. To discusse and examine well the Conscience.
4. To be sorry for our sinnes.
5. To purpose amendment.

XVII

XVII.

*What is to be pondered in the examination
of the Conscience.*

1. The transgression of thy Vowes.
2. Thy tepidity & coldnes in Gods seruice.
3. The distraction of thy mind.
4. The bad motions of thy mynd.
5. Detractions, and Murmurations.

XVIII.

What is to be obserued in the Refectory.

1. To be silent.
2. To seeke mortification.
3. To eate and drinke soberly.
4. To be attent to that which is read.
5. To feed the soule spiritually.

XIX.

*How to behaue thy selfe abroad
without dores.*

1. Diligently to guard and keep the gates of thy senses.
2. To obserue and keep Grauity, and Religious Modesty.
3. Not to giue eare to Vanities or Nouelties.
4. To speake and treat of spiritual matters.
5. To dispatch quickly, and soone returne home.

XX.

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To be obserued in thy bad.

1. To commend thy selfe to God, to thy Angell Guardian, and other thy holy Patrons.
2. To thinke of Death, and of thy grave.
3. To arme thy selfe against temptations, and suggestions of the Diuell.
4. To call vpon God, as often as thou awakest.
5. Not to lye longer then thou must needs.

FINIS.

Diligently to keep the gates of thy senses.
To observe and keep Conuention, and Religious Rules.
Not to give cause of scandal or Nonchalance.
To speake and treat of spiritual matters.
To dispatch quickly, and returne home.

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